

Barbara Ashbee, Ontario Canada, writes to the AMA after reading its Statement on Wind Turbines and Health. March 23, 2014

Dear Dr. Hambleton and Colleagues,

I have read the Australian Medical Associations 2014 position on industrial wind turbine emissions and health.

I cannot say anything more simply than your statement is so very wrong and it serves to further mislead the population of Australia and other countries following this serious issue.

Loud cyclical noise, infrasound/low frequency noise and episodes of dirty electricity are harming people by turbine facilities that are continuously being installed too close to homes, schools and businesses.

Irrefutable evidence including independent and industry ordered noise testing and first hand testimony, prove the existence of audible sound at levels that cause sleep disturbance and infrasound/low frequency vibration at levels causing illness, which in some cases is strong enough to make homes vibrate.

There are varying degrees of both audible sound, audible vibration and inaudible noise and vibration. To make a sweeping comment implying that there is no mechanism that sub audible infrasound could cause adverse health impacts is ridiculous. How do you explain when families, after living in a home for years, decades and even generations without problem, after the startup of a wind project around them become ill, begin lodging complaints, employ coping tactics such as sleeping in basements, hallways or away from the home and in some cases eventually abandon their homes? Are you really going with the premise that they are angry or they have a negative attitude? Do you honestly believe that someone would cause such enormous upheaval to their life, even pay a second rent and utilities while their home sits empty all because they're mad? It is absurd and yet that is what this statement implies.

The pulsing nature of the noise coming off wind turbines is distressing and is unlike the many sources of infrasound you mention. Waves roll gently, car noise is linear and generally reduces at night, airplanes pass, farm machinery is temporary noise. Even in one's house any fan or blower system can be shut down at will if it is causing disturbance, especially when trying to sleep. But the noise coming from wind turbines is pulsing, cyclical and can be very loud. Not only can you hear it when you are trying to sleep, but you can feel it. You cannot compare this mechanical pulsation with any other noise samples you have compared to, in fact there are many people who try to mask the sound of the turbines by operating an oscillating fan by their heads to drown out the thumping noise. It too is a fan but it is a constant sound rather than a whooshing, cyclical noise and it doesn't have the infrasound component that wind turbines do.

My husband and I know all too well what it is like to live among turbines. We were perfectly healthy and happy and welcomed the turbines as we had not heard of any negative issues with them. In fact, I was sharing photos of the project as it was being erected. Then they started operating. We were immediately impacted by noise causing sleep deprivation, headaches, tinnitus, stomach aches, cognitive problems and more until we simply had no choice but to move.

Dr. Hambleton, it was the most distressing life event I have ever experienced and caused serious damage to our health and well-being. It also impacted our pets. Once moved our symptoms resolved. This was not something generated by a negative attitude and yet our government, like you, continues to claim there are no impacts related to wind turbines and instead it is something

wrong with the people. It's quite stunning how so many people living so very far apart who don't know each other report suffering from the same symptoms and the only connection is a turbine project that started operation.

I am shocked and saddened that such a forward thinking sophisticated country such as Australia would be so pathetically cruel to your citizens by making such a strong statement, knowingly contributing to causing further injury. I shake my head in disgust at this bold and brazen misinformation coming from people who are in positions of public trust. It is shameful.

I question how many impacted families you and your colleagues have interviewed personally to come to your conclusions. I'm guessing about as many as the Chief Medical Officer of Health here in Ontario who also maintains there is no link that turbines are causing adverse health effects. Of course freedom of information documents show that Dr. King and her colleagues were aware of the impacts as they desperately tried to word the report to minimize the problem suggesting there was no direct link and omitting the indirect pathway completely. And of course our famous Dr. King, whose misguided literature review has been used by government and industry globally, has not spoken with any of the impacted families. Have you Dr. Hambleton?

Unfortunately for your association and the wind industry, the world has been educated by scores of good and ethical people. Many professionals independent of government and industry influence have been working very hard for years talking with impacted people, collecting data, researching, adding to existing data, sharing evidence, information and results. These good people include physicians and other health professionals, engineers, acousticians, electrical pollution consultants and others and it is they that have earned the public respect that our governments have lost by their mistruths and continued harm.

"First, do no harm"

The world will never be the same after this but if one good thing can come of this it is that we all know now that we must be deeply involved with our government and agencies, hold them accountable and demand transparency.

I had no idea this level of suppression and blatant discrimination could occur in such civilized countries as ours. While statements like your 2014 position on Wind Farms and Health might have worked and helped the wind industry 5 years ago, it certainly won't anymore. The globally shared vault of research has advanced way beyond that now.

I hope you will review all of the research that is being sent to you and in good faith you will see fit to change your position.

Barbara Ashbee (and on behalf of my husband Dennis Lormand)
Mulmur, Ontario
Canada

Please see attached a letter to my Premier and Prime Minister. It includes excerpts of first hand testimony from impacted residents in the province of Ontario - scores of people reporting the same symptoms as your citizens are experiencing.