

I have lived in the Evansford/Waubra area since I married in 1957.

Originally we believed that there would be few problems with the towers. We were told that they made no noise, there would be few lights, no adverse health effects and flicker was never mentioned.

I was diagnosed with chronic sleep apnoea and hired a CPAP(Continuous positive airway pressure machine) in 2009. Because of the vibration from the towers while denying this happens, Acciona bought me a new machine in 2010 because I have become extremely vocal in my criticism of the company and its representatives.

Even with a new machine, the vibration still occurs and when it does I have great trouble sleeping at all. The lack of sleep means that I am not able to do what I would like to, or need to do in any day. You never know from one day to the next how well you will be. It makes it very difficult to plan. An example is that I do a lot of judging of Cooking and Preserves at Shows across Victoria. I can be booked in but I may have to pull out because of a bad night with the turbines. Many times I cannot attend events or social activities. It certainly has affected the quality of my life and my enjoyment in life.

I have many other serious health problems such as angina which I believe are made much worse by the operation of the towers. During a short period in late January 2011 the East Mt Mitchell towers were turned off for over a week and I noticed a real improvement in my general health.

The impact the existence of the Waubra Wind Farm has had on our income is difficult to guess as we are practically retired and our son runs the property with some assistance from his father.

However, we expect that there will be an increase in rates and a devaluation of our farm.

Since my marriage 54 years ago I have been active in the local community. I was a judge with the CWA, a member of the Horticultural Society, Landcare and various fund raising activities.

Since the arrival of Acciona the attitude of locals, both stake holders and others, has been insulting and vindictive. Fuelled by a misinformation program from Acciona and local institutions who have been funded either openly or under the counter, people who have had the guts to stand up have been described as envious whingers.

This antagonistic attitude has been fostered until recently by local, state and federal politicians.

This total denial and disinterest in the problems experienced by neighbours of great industrial plants in a rural community has given the local population an excuse to treat us as "fair game". I no longer have any contact with Waubra.

We have been abused and intimidated by locals such as a stock carrier who tries to run us off the road or uses excessive noise and air brakes to intimidate us.

An example of the misinformation that has been spread by Acciona is a letter sent by Brett Thomas, CEO of Acciona Energy, to the Editor in the Weekly Times (June 2010). In this letter he claims that Acciona bought me a 'new breathing apparatus when the one she had been using for a few years was found to be faulty'. This is completely untrue. If the machine was faulty I would more likely than not be dead. Acciona Energy replaced the breathing apparatus which was two months old and in

perfect working order after receiving a letter from my specialist. (Letter can be viewed on request.) They tried to dress this up as doing a good deed for an elderly lady. This certainly was not the case.

I have watched my closest neighbour and a dear friend leave their home because they could no longer live there because of the health problems. As neighbours we always looked out for each other, lent each other a hand, something that is so important when you are living in the country. And now they are no longer there. Their home stands empty.

In conclusion I am extremely upset by the distress and suffering which is being felt by my friends and neighbours who have been forced out of their homes, or are suffering health problems because they must stay.

I am extremely troubled because I feel unable to offer any real assistance or comfort to people I care about.

Enid Thomas.