

Dear Senate Community Affairs Committee of Australia,

I live in the Forward Energy wind factory erected by Invenergy of Chicago, Illinois, USA. I live in a formerly quiet rural community one hour north of Milwaukee Wisconsin.

I will include a number of attachments to add to my testimony and documents that support the affects created by large industrial wind turbines placed too close to homes. The first two rows or the upper two rows I feel are most important because they concern me other than the Sue turbine health (is important though) and the video clip attachment. The video clip attachment shows several shadow flicker videos. The lower three rows are the affects of sleep deprivation.

I feel it is important to offer some background information because I have been labeled "anti wind".

I attempted to put my health issues in bold print and have also attached a page of health issues we are experiencing along with other attachments many dealing with affects of sleep deprivation.

This may be long and boring. I hope you can look at the health issues and wildlife affects and please look at part of my sound diary.

My family and I have lived in this remodeled farm house for 39 years. I have been retired for two years as a rural mail carrier. I attended the first meetings put on by Invenergy or the Wisconsin Public Service Commission. I was neutral on the benefits or affects of wind energy because I did not know of any side affects. I just knew what I was told about the benefits. Along with how beneficial this new concept to Wisconsin was the marketing comments on how quiet wind turbines were such as about as loud as a refrigerator or like the wind blowing through the trees. On my way home from this meeting running through my mind was how could I get one of these wind turbines on my 6+ acres of land. It just was not possible.

This began, I believe in 2005, as my copy of the environmental impact statement is dated March 2005. I either delivered mail or is on the way to and from work where 62 of the 86 turbines are erected. In September of 2007 construction began. I had my camera in my car and would take photos while on the mail route, on my way home from work and on weekends. Again, I was neutral and asked questions of the workers while often visiting with them. .

On March 3, 2008 I walked out of my house, hearing a jet I looked up into the sky to spot the plane. It was not a jet flying over. It was the 400 foot (122 meter) turbine placed 1560 feet (475 meters) straight north of our house. I immediately thought "we have been had" by Invenergy (the wind company). I should add this was the first large wind project in the State of Wisconsin. I felt I needed to document this sudden intrusion on our lives so I began a daily noise diary which I have attached part of.

I trusted our local town board, Invenergy and the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. I was very naïve and uneducated.

Immediately after the turbines began turning my wife and then 13 year old son began having headaches and loss of sleep. I would comment that “At least I am sleeping”. I would walk through our yard and have a pulsing sensation at the base of my neck. Often when I sat on the edge of the bed just before laying down I would feel nauseated. We didn’t connect these symptoms to anything.

About 2 months after the turbines began turning some visitors to the project gave me a CD with a radio interview given by Nina Pierpont, a doctor from New York, who was studying the affects of large industrial wind turbines on those families that lived close to them. I was amazed that every symptom that she mentioned one or all of us was experiencing.

I found that I had little motivation. I forgot how to do simple calculations that in the past were easy or did in my head. I found that I no longer dreamed. When I go away I have many and vivid dreams. It is like my brain is making up for the sleep deprivation experienced at home. I often stay in the car when my wife and I go shopping so that I can sleep. I am exhausted most days from sleep loss. Currently I sleep (or think I am sleeping well) until about 2:30 AM. After that I am woke up about once an hour and often after 4:30 get no more sleep. I believe much of my sleep is restless sleep. I found I was more stressed and angry. I now was occasionally getting headaches where in the past it was rare for me to experience a headache. When I get these headaches I usually wake up with the headache. For a long time resisted using the word depressed, but I have to admit I am depressed because of the generally constant sound and feeling that there is no way out of this.

In April of 2009 I noticed that I was gaining weight. I would gain about 7 pounds (3.2kg) and level off for a while. Then go up in a similar amount. I had gained about 27 pounds while trying to cut back on what I ate and not eating late at night. I mentioned this to a doctor who suggested that I have my cortisol level checked. I did that while experiencing sleep deprivation caused by the wind turbines. The test was evaluated by the Mayo Clinic. My level was 254. It should be less than 100. In late September/early October of 2009 all 86 turbines were shut down for 21 days. I found I had lost 17 pounds (7.7 kgs) of the 37 pounds (16.7 kgs) that I had gained. I immediately (next day) had my cortisol level checked. After this 21 day shut down and no sleep loss my cortisol level was 35. You draw the conclusion. Red flags should go up with this discovery.

I have blood work done every six months for a thyroid condition. When I began the routine blood tests my glucose level was less than 100. It should be less than 100. Six months ago it was 106. On January 13 it was 114. Diabetes is a disease caused by sleep deprivation. More on that in my health issues attachment.

You may think when I say the turbines sound like a jet flying over it is an exaggeration. It is not. The other difference between this sound and a real jet is a real jet sound goes away while the sound from the wind turbines does not. Often it goes on for three or four days. In the house the sound is like that of listening to your heart in a stethoscope or putting your boots in the cloths dryer and lying next to it

trying to sleep. I often hear the thumping sounds of the turbines over the sound of the voice on our TV.

The wind industry only used Dba sound measuring. They ignore the low frequency sound or Dbc readings. It is the low frequency sound or infra sound that has the most affect on people and probably animals. Often we are deprived of sleep not because of what we hear, but of what we do not hear, but the body is experiencing from the low frequency sounds.

Often wind energy supporters state that they live near a train track or a highway or an airport. I live not far from a busy train track, 100 feet or 30 meters from a busy county highway and our daughter lives in the flight path of a commercial airport. **There is no comparison of the sound from a train, highway or airport to that sound of large industrial wind turbines. Wind turbines have a much larger affect.**

I often hear wind energy companies tell victims to plant trees. That must satisfy the general "green" public. If you think about that statement how are trees planted today ever going to have beneficial results against 400 foot (122 meters) or 500 foot (152 meter) wind turbines. I have 1000 pine trees that I planted in 1987 between my house and the closest wind turbine. In my lifetime I will never see those trees tall enough to block the turbine or it's affects.

The electricity generated by this wind factory is reported to the NERC quarterly. There are times where the production is 17.5 % of capacity for a quarter. One project engineer told me that the wind turbines are designed to be 27-30% efficient. I now believe this is actually lower just like the estimated mileage for cars is lower than stated. I know if I put in a new furnace I will get a subsidy, however that furnace needs to be 95 or 96% efficient. Why are governments subsidizing the wind industry when by their own admission the turbines are less than 30% efficient?

The property values in our area are at a 30-40% loss from what they were before the wind turbines went up. I know of two properties that have not sold since the project went up in early 2008. One family abandoned their home because the sound and health affect to their family. Wind energy companies constantly tell that there are no affects to property values. If this is true why won't they offer property value protection to non participating land owners? They should be willing to back up their statements. (Misrepresentations)

You might ask. If things are so bad why don't you move? We have lived here 39 years and have remodeled our house to our dreams and desires. I would estimate that if a buy could be found they would pay less than half of its prior value.

I mentioned how naive I was and being supportive of this wind energy project. In the past almost three years I have become much more educated on wind energy. I know the claim that wind energy reduces CO₂, SO₂ and NO₂ emissions is not true. Conventional electricity production plants need to stay ramped up or be ready to ramp up or be in a spinning, but not producing mode to compensate for the unpredictability of wind. Some feel there is more pollution due to wind energy.

The media does not mention the pollution costs in smelting the ore and transporting the turbines to the final site. The environmental impact statement for our project states that up to 250 trucks will be on the roads daily. I delivered mail in that traffic and believe the estimates of the truck traffic to be accurate. Some farmers complain of the compaction of their farmland by the heavy trucks and equipment. There is a tremendous amount of concrete and rebar in the bases of the turbine. There is a tremendous amount of gravel and disruption of farm land in constructing the access roads.

I sometimes get the question, “Don’t you get used to the sound?” Or the statement, “You will get used to it”. No, I don’t get used to it. The sounds and issues get worse as time goes on. I feel more exhausted because I am getting less sleep then when I had my cortisol tested. I am more irritated and believe if the turbines are turning at all they are causing an affect on me. I can walk out of the house with out looking or hearing the turbines and feel irritated or angry. A week ago I walked of the house and moved my fist in a “yah” movemovment and felt “up”. I passed the tree near my house, looked up at the closest turbine and saw that it and the others were not turning. Again, any movement of the turbine/s has an affect.

I’m sure you are well aware that world wide wherever there are large industrial wind turbines there are serious health issues, property value loss and shadow flicker issues. I ask you. Would you want this affect on your family? Your children? Your parents? If not you need to disregard the money aspect of wind energy. You need to have safe set backs. Many leading doctors and other professionals are recommending a 1.2 mile (2 km) set back from homes. There needs be specific sound levels. Not 50 dba. Not 45 dba. Sound levels should be 5 dba. above the ambient sound before construction. There needs to be a requirement for property value protection to nonparticipant land owners. Shadow flicker should be eliminated from non participating land owners. There should be epidemiological studies done rather than to continue giving a pass to the basically unregulated wind industry.

I am living the affects of wind energy. I also know it is very costly to construct and costly for rate payers. Wind energy is very inefficient. Let’s remove the subsidies and let private industry develop wind energy. Let’s protect the people being forced to live near large industrial wind turbines.

Thank you for reading my testimony. I write this with the hope of helping others so that they do not have to endure the taking away of their quality of life like it has been taken from us.

Sincerely,
Gerry Meyer