

Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society August 2011; 31 (4)*Table of Contents with Abstracts:*

Willem H. Vanderburg **Assessing Our Ability to Design and Plan Green Energy Technologies:** 251-255

John P. Harrison **Wind Turbine Noise:** 256-261. Following an introduction to noise and noise regulation of wind turbines, the problem of adverse health effects of turbine noise is discussed. This is attributed to the characteristics of turbine noise and deficiencies in the regulation of this noise. Both onshore and offshore wind farms are discussed.

Bob Thorn **The Problems With “Noise Numbers” for Wind Farm Noise Assessment:** 262-290. Human perception responds primarily to sound character rather than sound level. Wind farms are unique sound sources and exhibit special audible and inaudible characteristics that can be described as modulating sound or as a tonal complex. Wind farm compliance measures based on a specified noise number alone will fail to address problems with noise nuisance. The character of wind farm sound, noise emissions from wind farms, noise prediction at residences, and systemic failures in assessment processes are examined. Human perception of wind farm sound is compared with noise assessment measures and complaint histories. The adverse effects on health of persons susceptible to noise from wind farms are examined and a hypothesis, the concept of heightened noise zones (pressure variations), as a marker for cause and effect is advanced. A sound level of LAeq 32 dB outside a residence and above an individual’s threshold of hearing inside the home are identified as markers for serious adverse health effects affecting susceptible individuals. The article is referenced to the author’s research, measurements, and observations at different wind farms in New Zealand and Victoria, Australia.

Arline L. Bronzaft **The Noise From Wind Turbines: Potential Adverse Impacts on Children’s Well-Being:** 291-295. Research linking loud sounds to hearing loss in youngsters is now widespread, resulting in the issuance of warnings to protect children’s hearing. However, studies attesting to the adverse effects of intrusive sounds and noise on children’s overall mental and physical health and well-being have not received similar attention. This, despite the fact that many studies have demonstrated that intrusive noises such as those from passing road traffic, nearby rail systems, and overhead aircraft can adversely affect children’s cardiovascular system, memory, language development, and learning acquisition. While some schools in the United States have received funds to abate intrusive aircraft noise, for example, many schools still expose children to noises from passing traffic and overhead aircraft. Discussion focuses on the harmful effects of noise on children, what has to be done to remedy the situation, and the need for action to

lessen the impacts of noise from all sources. Furthermore, based on our knowledge of the harmful effects of noise on children's health and the growing body of evidence to suggest the potential harmful effects of industrial wind turbine noise, it is strongly urged that further studies be conducted on the impacts of industrial wind turbines on their health, as well as the health of their parents, before forging ahead in siting industrial wind turbines.

Alec N. Salt and James A. Kaltenbach **Infrasound From Wind Turbines Could Affect Humans:** 296-302. Wind turbines generate low-frequency sounds that affect the ear. The ear is superficially similar to a microphone, converting mechanical sound waves into electrical signals, but does this by complex physiologic processes. Serious misconceptions about low-frequency sound and the ear have resulted from a failure to consider in detail how the ear works. Although the cells that provide hearing are insensitive to infrasound, other sensory cells in the ear are much more sensitive, which can be demonstrated by electrical recordings. Responses to infrasound reach the brain through pathways that do not involve conscious hearing but instead may produce sensations of fullness, pressure or tinnitus, or have no sensation. Activation of subconscious pathways by infrasound could disturb sleep. Based on our current knowledge of how the ear works, it is quite possible that low-frequency sounds at the levels generated by wind turbines could affect those living nearby.

Carl V. Phillips **Properly Interpreting the Epidemiologic Evidence About the Health Effects of Industrial Wind Turbines on Nearby Residents:** 303-315. There is overwhelming evidence that wind turbines cause serious health problems in nearby residents, usually stress-disorder-type diseases, at a nontrivial rate. The bulk of the evidence takes the form of thousands of adverse event reports. There is also a small amount of systematically gathered data. The adverse event reports provide compelling evidence of the seriousness of the problems and of causation in this case because of their volume, the ease of observing exposure and outcome incidence, and case-crossover data. Proponents of turbines have sought to deny these problems by making a collection of contradictory claims including that the evidence does not "count," the outcomes are not "real" diseases, the outcomes are the victims' own fault, and that acoustical models cannot explain why there are health problems so the problems must not exist. These claims appeared to have swayed many nonexpert observers, though they are easily debunked. Moreover, though the failure of models to explain the observed problems does not deny the problems, it does mean that we do not know what, other than kilometers of distance, could sufficiently mitigate the effects. There has been no policy analysis that justifies imposing these effects on local residents. The attempts to deny the evidence cannot be seen as honest scientific disagreement and represent either gross incompetence or intentional bias.

Robert Y. McMurtry **Toward a Case Definition of Adverse Health Effects in the Environs of Industrial Wind Turbines: Facilitating a Clinical Diagnosis:** 316-320.

Internationally, there are reports of adverse health effects (AHE) in the environs of industrial wind turbines (IWT). There was multidisciplinary confirmation of the key characteristics of the AHE at the first international symposium on AHE/IWT. The symptoms being reported are consistent internationally and are characterized by crossover findings or a predictable appearance of signs and symptoms present with exposure to IWT sound energy and amelioration when the exposure ceases. There is also a revealed preference of victims to seek restoration away from their homes. This article identifies the need to create a case definition to establish a clinical diagnosis. A case definition is proposed that identifies the sine qua non diagnostic criteria for a diagnosis of adverse health effects in the environs of industrial wind turbines. Possible, probable, and confirmed diagnoses are detailed. The goal is to foster the adoption of a common case definition that will facilitate future research efforts.

Carmen M. E. Krogh **Industrial Wind Turbine Development and Loss of Social Justice?** 321-333. This article explores the loss of social justice reported by individuals living in the environs of industrial wind turbines (IWTs). References indicate that some individuals residing in proximity to IWT facilities experience adverse health effects. These adverse health effects are severe enough that some families have abandoned their homes. Individuals report they welcomed IWTs into their community and the negative consequences were unexpected. Expressions of grief are exacerbated by the emotional and physical toll of individuals' symptoms, loss of enjoyment of homes and property, disturbed living conditions, financial loss, and the lack of society's recognition of their situation. The author has investigated the reported loss of social justice through a review of literature, personal interviews with, and communications from, those reporting adverse health effects. The author's intention is to create awareness that loss of social justice is being associated with IWT development. This loss of justice arises from a number of factors, including the lack of fair process, the loss of rights, and associated disempowerment. These societal themes require further investigation. Research by health professionals and social scientists is urgently needed to address the health and social impacts of IWTs operating near family homes.

Carmen M.E. Krogh, Lorrie Gillis, Nicholas Kouwen, and Jeff Aramini **WindVOiCe, a Self-Reporting Survey: Adverse Health Effects, Industrial Wind Turbines, and the Need for Vigilance Monitoring:** 334-345. Industrial wind turbines have been operating in many parts of the globe. Anecdotal reports of perceived adverse health effects relating to industrial wind turbines have been published in the media and on the Internet. Based on these reports, indications were that some residents perceived they were experiencing adverse health effects. The purpose of the WindVOiCe health survey was to provide vigilance monitoring for

those wishing to report their perceived adverse health effects. This article discusses the results of a self reporting health survey regarding perceived adverse health effects associated with industrial wind turbines.

Martin Shain **Public Health Ethics, Legitimacy, and the Challenges of Industrial Wind Turbines: The Case of Ontario, Canada:** 346-353. While industrial wind turbines (IWTs) clearly raise issues concerning threats to the health of a few in contrast to claimed health benefits to many, the trade-off has not been fully considered in a public health framework. This article reviews public health ethics justifications for the licensing and installation of IWTs. It concludes that the current methods used by government to evaluate licensing applications for IWTs do not meet most public health ethical criteria. Furthermore, these methods are contrary to widely held fundamental principles of administrative law and governmental legitimacy. A set of decision-making principles are suggested to address this situation that are derived from existing and emerging legal principles in Canada and elsewhere. These include the Precautionary Principle, the Least Impactful Means (Proportionality) Test, and the Neighbor Principle. doi: 10.1177/0270467611412552