

## Survey by CWEST; at Blue Sky Green Field wind farm, Johnsburg Spring 2009, Coalition for Wisconsin Environmental Stewardship

November 16, 2009

Jim Cummings

Jim, I went back to the data we compiled from the Johnsburg survey and compiled the following information. Unfortunately, we do not have any data that indicates which of the respondents are impacted by multiple turbines. A number of those responding are surrounded by turbines, but I have no way to identify that from the information we collected.

<u># responding</u>	<u>distance to turbine(s)</u>	<u>Noise is a problem</u>	<u>Noise is not a problem</u>
9	<1000 feet	6 (3 host)	3 (all 3 host)
31	@1000 feet	23 (3 host)	8 (1 host)
42	1000 – 1500 ft	24 (1 host)	18 (2 host)
25	1500 – 2000 ft	12	13 (1 host)
57 (??55?)	2000 – 3000 ft	25 (2 host)	30 (3 host)
162		90	72
10	3000+ feet	3	7 (1 host)

JC ADDS: some (eg Harrison SWV 2010 symposium) have reported this data based on dB:  
 <35dB, 32% say noise is problem  
 35-40dB, 53%  
 >40dB, 44% NOT SURE HOW THESE RELATE

An additional 33 families responded but do not indicate how close the turbines were to their residence. In this group, 15 indicated a problem with noise and 19 indicated no problem. Three of the latter group host turbines.

JC adds: so this is how they get to the 219 in original survey report, which was presented as people within a half mile. At least 10 are beyond that, perhaps a few of the additional 33 as well.  
**The 219 represented a 46% response rate. Not bad, not great.**

As you observed from the summary report you saw, we had 23 individuals that host turbines respond to the survey with 6 of those indicating they would not do it if given the chance to turn back the clock.

Ronald Dietrich  
 CCCRE Spokesperson, Calumet county Citizens for Responsible Energy

## **This was the first, less detailed report on the survey**

## **My inquiries about it led to the above more detailed info**

### **Johnsburg Survey Summary Updated 4/2/09**

See AEI post on this at <http://aeinews.org/archives/465>

Residents of the Johnsburg, WI area who **live within one half mile** of at least one wind turbine were asked to complete a written survey. **Forty six per cent returned the survey**, many with additional comments. Here is a summary of the 219 responses that were received. Note: residents live in the midst of the Blue Sky/Green Field Wind Farm in east central Wisconsin – 88 Industrial Wind Turbines scattered across 10,600 acres of rolling farmland in Fond du Lac County.

#### **A. If you could do it over, would you have turbines on your property or near your home?**

60% said NO, including 30% of those currently hosting a turbine.

#### **B. What problems have you encountered?**

1. TV, radio reception – 57% (124) now have a problem with TV or radio reception
2. Shadow Flicker - 52 % (113) stated they have a problem with shadow flicker
3. Noise – **50 % (108) stated yes, noise is a problem**
4. Look of the landscape – 49% (108) dislike the new views
5. Cell phone reception – 30% (66) now have cell phone reception problems
6. Construction concerns – 21% (47) cited problems during the installation
7. Impact on plants and animals – 11% (25) indicated problems

#### **C. Would you approve an expansion for more turbines in your area? (Phase II)**

63% said NO, including 26% of the respondents that indicated they already host a turbine.

#### **D. How far should a turbine be placed from a home?**

62% indicate a setback should be 1/2 mile or more; only (22%) support the Wisconsin Public Service Commission setback of 1,000 ft.

#### **E. When asked about building or buying a home, 71% said not closer than 1/2 mile to a turbine.**

#### **F. What Health problems does your family experience that you attribute to the turbines?**

33% indicated at least one of the following problems: Sleep Loss; Headaches; Nausea; Stress; or Seizures, with 25% stating their sleep was disturbed at least once per week.

**G. In addition to these impacts on humans, 30% indicated negative effects on pets, farm animals or wildlife.**

**H. How do you think the wind farm has affected your property value?** 58% stated their property lost value. Estimates of loss ranged from 10% to 60%.

**Typical Comments also received from those responding are listed by subject area: (3/30/2009)**

#1: I know we need alternate energy sources, but we were told they (turbines) were not noisy and they are extremely noisy.

#2: Very noisy, cannot open my windows in the spring, summer or fall.

#3: Noise is loud – you can't hear birds in the morning or turkey gobbling. Can't sleep with windows open. Cannot hear deer coming down trail when hunting. My home was here first!

#4: Usually they (turbines) sound like a turbo prop plane flying over ready to land. In a rainstorm they moan and groan. If it's windy they sound like distant thunder. This used to be God's country, now it looks like the "Twilight Zone" day and night. In order to receive 'green' energy from the wind farm, we have to pay an extra \$1 per day. That's \$365 per year. This energy is on the grid and being used in southeastern Wisconsin, not here where we are inconvenienced.

#5: Ringing in my ears – it stops when I leave the area, comes back as soon as I come back in the area. My neighbors complained of it also. We can't leave the windows open at night in warm weather because of the loud roaring or airplane noise from the turbines. When it's windy they get louder yet. We also can't sit outside in the summer.

#6: Rumbling at times when windy, can't sleep. They should be put in an area where they can be uniform and not scattered around. They should be put on a ledge where land is not disturbed. The water ways were real bad last year. Water was rerouted and there is constant ground work being done.

#7: I built in the country for peace and quiet. I do not have the “quiet of the night” anymore. I do not hear bullfrogs, owls, or mourning doves and we live in a semi-wooded area. I believe in wind energy, but not in a populated area. I signed a document to allow a wind mill to within 1000 feet of my home – I screwed up! I have a different opinion now!

#8: The quiet country life that we had is now gone. Stone quarries and salvage yards are only allowed to operate from 7:00 till 5:00 weekdays, till noon on Saturdays, and closed on Sundays. Why not the windmills – they are a business too? People are not even able to build on their own property because the town board will not allow them to build closer than 1000 feet from the windmill! People in this area no longer have any say in what happens on their own property and this is wrong. How do we get green out of a pile of scrap iron that is inefficient and a large eye sore in large areas compared to coal plants in a small area creating large amounts of energy that are still required when the windmills are not operating? And Flight for Life can not land due to wind turbulence!

#9: I think land owners and homeowners should do their homework before jumping at the almighty \$Dollar. They (turbines) are an eyesore for the nice community we used to have. My advice, don't go through it, you'll be sorry. In summer I cannot open windows due to the noise. People come to visit and they cannot believe people have to put up with them (turbines).

#10: Takes away from our beautiful sunrises and sunsets. We have to close windows. (to sleep)

#11: Flicker wakes you up in the morning whenever it is sunny. Very upset with the Shadow Flicker. They say we are too far away from the windmills to qualify for the “blind program” but we still get shadow flicker all the time. I video- taped it, gave it to them, and it still doesn't matter. Very unhappy with the service.

#12: Dogs run in circles when flickering.

#13: The flicker causes heart rhythm problems – tachycardia. There are no quiet times outside unless the wind stops. WE Energy at times keeps the blades turning for appearance sake even though the unit is off the grid and not generating power. I would much rather have another nuclear power plant. {Note: one nuclear submarine would supply the power that the entire Johnsburg project does.}

#14: All our radios have severe static since they (turbines) went up and turned on. The “Holy Land” has lost its beauty. We are concerned about wells and water going bad.

#15: We had Monarch butterflies for 5 years. Now we have not had Monarch butterflies the first year. It (turbine) ruins the beautiful sunset.

#16: They (turbines) should not be closer than 2 miles to house.

#17: If the state is mandating the building of these units (turbines), why are there none on state property?

#18: Citing should be from property line and further from homes.

#19: They are too close to residences. We believe WE Energy was not honest with homeowners and farmers. Wondering what plans are for more in towns of Taycheedah, Calumet, and Marshfield.

#20: These things suck, put them (turbines) in an open area away from homes.

#21: Flight for Life not being able to land within ¼ mile of a wind turbine during daylight and not at all at night is a huge concern...learned about this through talking to other residents.

#22: We will be lucky if we are able to sell our house.

#23: Who will buy our home now? Why can't someone help us now before the next 40 turbines go up in the same area? Farmers signed a contract under the table – we had no say in anything. We can't build a shed – it was too big so they say- but they can approve of these damn, good-for –nothing wind farms. Closed windows – still can hear them damn things. Tell people to fight back before it's too late.

#24: I'd go where I don't have to look at them! I am mad that our whole 75 acres is under lease, instead of the 40 (acres) I thought it was. I was upset people were so eager to sign the

contract without lawyers... Get a lawyer. (Editor's Note: Husband is upset but does not want to go public – they host turbines)

#25: What happens in years to come with underground wires? Stray voltage? That is awful to deal with – we had it here years ago.

#26: I built my house in the country because I like the view - rolling hills not turbines.

#27: My neighbor and I were good friends for over 27 years. Now that he has 2 turbines on his land, he ignores me completely and we never talk. He won't even wave anymore. I noticed approximately 10 less species of birds in the summer of '08. This winter I had fewer wood peckers, cardinals, blue jays, juncos, and no finches at my bird feeder.

#28: Our area used to get along well; lots of neighbors and relatives not talking now.

# 29: As a licensed WI Real Estate Agent I sold 2.95 acres (3 parcels) with lake views for \$12,000. The three had listed for \$86,700. The seller was forced to sell at the low figure (caused by the presence of the turbines) for personal health reasons.

#30: In 2006 prior to the installation of the turbines we attempted to sell our home and had two interested buyers who had viewed it twice. I had to disclose the town decision to allow windmills in our area and one party said they did not want to live around turbines and the other party stopped calling. We still have not sold. (2009)