

MULTI-MUNICIPAL WIND TURBINE WORKING GROUP

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Greetings Members of Council,

Congratulations on your election to Municipal Council. Your commitment and leadership are invaluable to your community and residents.

As Municipal Leaders, we are mandated by the *Municipal Act, 2001, as amended*, to provide measures necessary for the health, safety and well-being of citizens within our jurisdiction. The Multi-Municipal Wind Turbine Working Group (MMWTWG) collectively addresses concerns that are raised in relation to the various wind turbine projects across the province.

The list of concerns and implications is continually growing and many citizens are completely unaware of the effects, both short and long term that wind turbines pose. To provide some context to the complex matters that the MMWTWG continues to work to resolve, some principal issues are provided.

1. Public Safety

- Setbacks for tower collapse are insufficient. The current blade length plus 10 metres requirement is not a strong enough protective measure. Ontario has seen collapses of GE Turbine at Raleigh and Vestas Turbine at Bow Lake. Public database details at least 95 collapses worldwide, including Enercon, Siemens, Nordex, and others. Bow Lake turbines were also permitted to restart by regulator without any public release of information of recent failure.
- Setbacks for blade failures are insufficient. The current blade length plus 10 metres requirement is not a strong enough protective measure. Ontario has seen debris at 560 metres with 51-metre setback, with failures from GE, Vestas, Suzlon/Repower. Regulator did inadequate safety review of post commissioning installation of "power cone" at Skyway 8 and is permitting turbine restart without public investigation into impact of failure on tower integrity.
- Setbacks for ice throw are also insufficient, as the blade length plus 10 metre setback is less than the ice throw distance witnessed in Ontario.
- Fire hazard – Ontario has witnessed turbine fire and flaming debris on the ground at 200 metres, while setback was 50 metres. Ministry review failed to recommend industry standard protective barriers for fire suppression in spite of examples of fires in similar turbines.
- Landholder leases give no setback protection for vulnerable citizens (children and other family members of lease holder, employees, couriers, etc.)

2. Health Impacts

- Sleep deprivation – most common identified irritant.
- Stress – identified link from irritants to cardio vascular events.
- Unexplained cardiac events, diabetic events
- Cyclical noise (major irritant) not assessed by Ontario Compliance Protocol.
- Tonality (irritant at some projects) not adequately assessed by standards.
- Dominant, irritating, turbine noise signature dwarfs rural noise environment.
- Loss of enjoyment of property, contrary to Environmental Protection Act.

3. Municipal Finances

- Tax base – Assessment of multi-million-dollar turbines capped at under \$50k per MW, adversely impacts tax base. Similar to unpermitted “bonusing” by permitting low taxation. Impacts ability to build on adjoining properties.
- Community impact grants – associated “gag-clauses” deny transparency.
- Impact on roadways – large component delivery cause damages to roads.
- Upcoming impact on landfill – Component End of Life – blades not recyclable.
- Decommissioning costs – no guarantee of cost coverage at many sites.

4. Community Cohesiveness

- Rural neighbourhood – acrimony prevents neighbours working together, those profiting often not those who suffer impacts

5. Energy Supply Stability

- Mismatch to consumer demand, turbine output falls as consumer load increases in morning, but rises as consumer load falls in the evening
- Seasonal mismatch a big concern as turbine output poorest when consumer demand is highest in summer air conditioning season, and in winter heating season, yet turbine output is highest when consumer demand is lowest in spring and fall
- Requires construction of backup generation, that must price output highly as only operated intermittently.

6. Consumer Energy Cost

- First access to grid costs – force less costly generation off the grid. Ontario energy transitioned from least costly to most expensive in North America.
- Costs of required storage options will increase costs even further.
- Lowered electrical system reliability due to uncontrollable factors (weather).

7. Lack of response from responsible Ministry to complaints and professional input

- Inconsistent Ministry response to complaints from impacted citizens
- Lack of Ministry response to professional input – no disposition of items, just neglect.

8. Lack of Respect of Impacted Citizens

- Ministry failed to investigate the majority of complaints, took no action to correct, contrary to Renewable Energy Approvals regulations.

This Working Group shares municipal advice on by-laws, road use agreements, fire suppression requirements and other considerations that need to be considered before dealing with wind developers. We are striving to support municipalities and citizens and to become aware of issues and possible remedies regarding industrial wind turbines before it is too late to take proactive actions.

Not only do Municipality's that have wind turbine projects within its boundaries need to ensure they are aware of the negative impacts associated with these projects but Municipality's without projects also need to be aware of the same to be informed when developers come knocking on the door. Continued membership on the Multi-Municipal Wind Turbine Working Group will ensure that this knowledge base is maintained and updated as changes within the industry emerge.

The meetings are held bi-monthly, virtually via Teams which has assisted in increasing our member municipalities. Currently there are 11 Member Municipalities on the MMWTWG which includes:

- Municipality of Arran-Elderslie
- Municipality of Kincardine
- Township of Chatsworth
- Township of Melanthon
- Municipality of Central Huron
- Town of Grand Valley
- Municipality of Grey Highlands
- Township of Huron-Kinloss
- Municipality of Brockton
- Township of West Lincoln
- Municipality of Dutton-Dunwich

The MMWTWG annual membership fee is set at the beginning of each year and is currently set at \$400.00. This fee is used to cover the cost of a Recording Secretary, miscellaneous costs for preparation and circulation of materials as well as any fees related to space rentals for meetings. A small surplus is maintained for donation to a defense fund in case any municipal bylaw might be challenged by a developer. The yearly fee is paid to the "Municipality of Arran-Elderslie"; and sent directly to the Municipal Office c/o the Deputy Clerk, who is the current Recording Secretary for the Working Group.

Each Member Municipality may appoint two members of Council to sit on the Working Group, one alternate member of Council and one citizen member who brings additional expertise to the discussion.

We look forward to your continued membership on this important Working Group and hope to see some new faces at our next meeting scheduled for January 12, 2023 at 7:00pm.

Warm Regards,
On behalf of the Chair, Tom Allwood



Julie Hamilton, Recording Secretary
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