

Honourable Minister Wilkinson
Minister of the Environment (MOE)
Ontario, Canada

February 15, 2011

Dear Honourable Minister Wilkinson

Firstly, I wish to thank the provincial government for putting in place the moratorium on offshore wind turbines. I support your endeavours to research more fully the potential environmental harm to our drinking water, migratory routes, fishing industry etc.

Two weeks ago however after hearing your re-assurances on the Dale Goldhawk show, and reading your comments to the Perth council where you pointed out your "ministry has the power to ensure compliance with regulations and shut down renewable energy operators that don't comply," I felt compelled to forward my experience with MOE's ability to enforce regulation for land based turbines, to you.

Filing a formal complaint with MOE or the wind developer is NOT as simple as picking up the phone and calling the 1-800 number. Below is an example which describes my own experience in more detail, but in summary, here are the results of an on-site inspection done by my local MOE office in December 2010 regarding wind turbine noise exceeding 40dBA :

- MOE officers had no knowledge of the allowable limits
- officers indicated even if they took a sound measurement it couldn't be considered an official reading
- officers acknowledged there is no noise measurement protocol available
- officers indicated they had received no training on how to measure
- officers indicated there have been many calls complaining but there is 'still nothing they can do'.
- officers indicated that 50 dBA was acceptable in the day and 45 dBA at night when clearly Honourable Minister you indicated the allowable level is 40 dBA when speaking on Feb. 8/11 on the Dale Goldhawk show.

My description of what occurred during a visit by two Environmental Officers from the Ministry of the Environment, Windsor Office on Dec. 7,2010

I have filed several complaints with MOE. Today (Dec. 7,2010) was the first day that they have made the effort to come out and experience the roaring from my backyard. I was awake around 2 a.m. and had a hard time falling back to sleep. Not sure if it was the noise, since inside the house the noise is inaudible. I am woken however abruptly when this happens. My readings were in the range of 38 to 42 dBA at this time and 50 dBC.

By 8:00 am the noise level had increase with noise readings around 44 dBA and 55 dBC. I thought it best to call personally the MOE office in Windsor. I usually file a complaint via e-mail since I want a paper record of my complaints

Two environmental officers arrived on scene around 10:30 am. One male and one female. Both stood on my porch and listened. Comments by them generally surrounded how the noise was mostly the wind. The female officer even commented that she found it quiet, in relation to her location in the city.

I related that the noise was more of a roaring intermittent sound for me and that I am also hearing a high pitched tone which they said they could not hear. I also explained that I can feel slight rumblings in my chest

which they said they could not feel. I explained that I was getting readings in the low to mid 40's.dBA with some readings reaching over 50 dBA some nights.

I commented on how these lower levels could be in compliance depending on where they take the wind speed measurement. When I asked how wind speed would be measured to verify the allowed levels, the male officer explained to me that the wind speed would be a general wind speed taken in a non sheltered area.

This same officer tried to pass off that the noise was allowed to go up to 50 dBA during the day and 45 dBA at night. When I corrected them on how this project is allowed to go up to 51 dBA depending on the wind speed, they explained they really didn't know what was the limit that was allowed.

One officer offered to take a reading with their own equipment. When I asked how this reading would be used, they indicated that it could not be used as an official reading for compliance but that it would be recorded within their report. I asked for a copy of their report to which they agreed.

We talked about how they still have not been trained properly and that wind noise monitoring is quite complicated. They do have equipment however but when I asked them if I could take pictures of them doing the readings, the male officer refused. The female officer after discussing with him said there was no use since it could not be considered an official reading anyway.

I mentioned that I was awaiting a call and they soon left after that. I requested a copy of their report which the female officer confirmed she would send to me as soon as possible.

The male officer did noted to me that they are receiving quite a few noise complaints in the area. He encouraged me and anyone I am talking to, to file a complaint with them if they find the noise disturbing. He said, "Only until there are many complaints, will action be taken". The squeaky wheel gets the grease".

I wondered how many that would need to be before MOE takes action.

P.S. I asked about the protocol for measuring noise, if this was available and they told me that they are being told that soon it will be. They have still not received training on how to measure noise. They also told me that there have been many calls complaining but there is still nothing they can do. They encouraged me to relay to my neighbours to call if they felt that the noise was a nuisance. He indicated that only until many people call and complain will things change. They have people who call twice a day.

In follow up to this visit the Environmental officer provided this written response,

Colette, As requested the reference number for the complaint you filed on December 7, 2010 is #6451-8BWQME. You may go through the Freedom of Information process to obtain a copy of the report or any other reports you require. Also, as you requested below are observations from the site visit conducted in response to your complaint.

The following observations were noted by the undersigned Provincial Officer during the site visit from 10:45 am to 11:15 am:

A swishing noise at a noise intensity rated on a scale of 2 or 3 out of 10 coming from the wind turbines. The noise was more audible when the wind speed increased. Other noises noted during the site visit that were

louder and in the immediate vicinity of the porch were winds shaking a tree just beside the garage west of the porch and the pool cover east of the porch. No high pitch noises were observed.

So in essence Honourable minister, I must request (and pay for) the full report through an FOI in order to see how MOE is following up on my noise complaint.

I have called the Spill Actions number several times since this time and have not received a response from MOE or the developer. When I asked the developer before Christmas what was done about 3 earlier complaints, this is the answer I received from IPC Canada

In regards to your query on the three formal complaints. A standard protocol was followed:

- (1) AIM Harrow LP formally reported the complaints to the MOE.*
- (2) An inspection of the event logs from the project SCADA system was undertaken to investigate whether any errors or issues were present at the time,*
- (3) An analysis of wind speeds and wind direction was conducted*
- (4) The complaints were formally reported to VESTAS for verification of event logs*
- (5) A report was submitted to MOE.*

No further action/mitigation has been required of AIM Harrow LP at this time.

cheers.

Dave

*Vice President, Strategic Affairs
International Power Canada, Inc.
(formerly AIM PowerGen Corporation)*

*105 Commerce Valley Dr. W. | Suite 410 | Markham, Ontario L3T 7W3
(o) 416.502.0993 ext. 234 | (c) 647.519.8466 | (e) dtimm@iprcanada.com | (w) www.ipplc.com*

Therefore Minister, indicating that your ministry is “responding to complaints and enforcing regulations, or that you have not been receiving complaints to indicate there are problems with these projects,” either confirms that you are out of touch with what is happening, both in rural Ontario and in your ministry, or you are failing to disclose the truth when speaking to the media regarding these issues. Neither option should be considered acceptable.

Respectfully

Colette McLean
Essex Country Resident
AIM Harrow Wind project
Ontario, Canada