

Local Law Filing

(Use this form to file a local law with the Secretary of State.)

Text of law should be given as amended. Do not include matter being eliminated and do not use italics or underlining to indicate new matter.

☐ County  
☐ City of Hartsville  
☒ Town  
☐ Village

FILED  
STATE RECORDS  
JAN 05 2010  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Local Law No. 2 of the year 2009

A local law entitled Wind Energy Facilities Local Law  
(Insert Title)

Be it enacted by the Town Board of the  
(Name of Legislative Body)

☐ County  
☐ City of Hartsville as follows:  
☒ Town  
☐ Village

See text of Local Law No. 2 of 2009 annexed hereto.

(If additional space is needed, attach pages the same size as this sheet, and number each.)  
(1)

**(Complete the certification in the paragraph that applies to the filing of this local law and  
strike out that which is not applicable.)**

**1. (Final adoption by local legislative body only.)**

I hereby certify that the local law annexed hereto, designated as local law No. 2 of 2009 of the  
(County)(City)(Town)(Village) of Hartsville was duly passed by the  
Town Board on December 29, 2009, in accordance with the applicable provisions of law.

(Name of Legislative body)

**2. (Passage by local legislative body with approval, no disapproval or repassage after disapproval  
by the Elective Chief Executive Officer\*.)**

I hereby certify that the local law annexed hereto, designated as local law No. \_\_\_\_\_ of 20\_\_\_\_ of the  
(County)(City)(Town)(Village) of \_\_\_\_\_ was duly passed by the  
\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_, and was (approved)( not approved)

(Name of Legislative body)

(repassed after disapproval) by the \_\_\_\_\_ and was deemed duly  
(Elective Chief Executive Officer\*)

adopted on \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_, in accordance with the applicable provisions of law.

**3. (Final adoption by referendum.)**

I hereby certify that the local law annexed hereto, designated as local law No. \_\_\_\_\_ of 20\_\_\_\_ of the  
(County)(City)(Town)(Village) of \_\_\_\_\_ was duly passed by the  
\_\_\_\_\_ on 20\_\_\_\_, and was (approved)( not approved)

(Name of Legislative body)

(repassed after disapproval) by the \_\_\_\_\_ on 20\_\_\_\_.  
(Elective Chief Executive Officer\*)

Such local law was submitted to the people by reason of a (mandatory)(permissive) referendum, and received the  
affirmative vote of a majority of the qualified electors voting thereon at the (general) (special)(annual) election held  
on \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_, in accordance with the applicable provisions of law.

**4. (Subject to permissive referendum and final adoption because no valid petition was filed  
requesting referendum.)**

I hereby certify that the local law annexed hereto, designated as local law No. \_\_\_\_\_ of 20\_\_\_\_ of the  
(County)(City)(Town)(Village) of \_\_\_\_\_ was duly passed by the  
\_\_\_\_\_ on 20\_\_\_\_, and was (approved)( not approved)

(Name of Legislative body)

(repassed after disapproval) by the \_\_\_\_\_ on 20\_\_\_\_. Such local  
(Elective Chief Executive Officer\*)

law was subject to permissive referendum and no valid petition requesting such referendum was filed as of \_\_\_\_\_,  
20\_\_\_\_, in accordance with the applicable provisions of law.

\* Elective Chief Executive Officer means or includes the chief executive officer of a county elected on a county-wide basis or, if there  
be none, the chairperson of the county legislative body, the mayor of a city or village, or the supervisor of a town where such officer  
is vested with the power to approve or veto local laws or ordinances.

**5. (City local law concerning Charter revision proposed by petition.)**

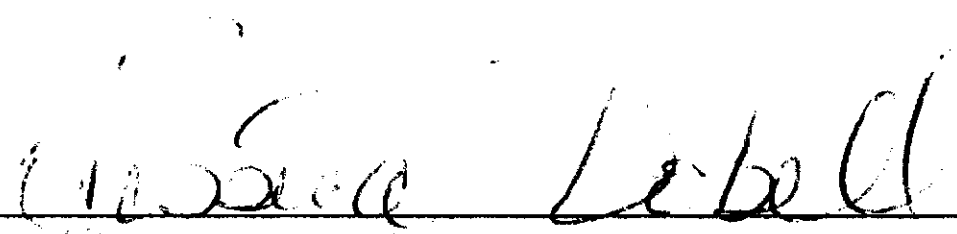
I hereby certify that the local law annexed hereto, designated as local law No. \_\_\_\_\_ of 20 \_\_\_\_\_ of the City of \_\_\_\_\_ having been submitted to referendum pursuant to the provisions of section (36)(37) of the Municipal Home Rule Law, and having received the affirmative vote of a majority of the qualified electors of such city voting thereon at the (special)(general) election held on \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_\_, became operative.

**6. (County local law concerning adoption of Charter.)**

I hereby certify that the local law annexed hereto, designated as local law No. \_\_\_\_\_ of 20 \_\_\_\_\_ of the County of \_\_\_\_\_, State of New York, having been submitted to the electors at the General Election of November \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_\_, pursuant to subdivisions 5 and 7 of section 33 of the Municipal Home Rule Law, and having received the affirmative vote of a majority of the qualified electors of the cities of said county as a unit and a majority of the qualified electors of the towns of said county considered as a unit voting at said general election, became operative.

**(If any other authorized form of final adoption has been followed, please provide an appropriate certification.)**

I further certify that I have compared the preceding local law with the original on file in this office and that the same is a correct transcript therefrom and of the whole of such original local law, and was finally adopted in the manner indicated in paragraph 1, above.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of the county legislative body, City, Deputy Town or Village Clerk or  
officer designated by local legislative body **Jessica Dobell**

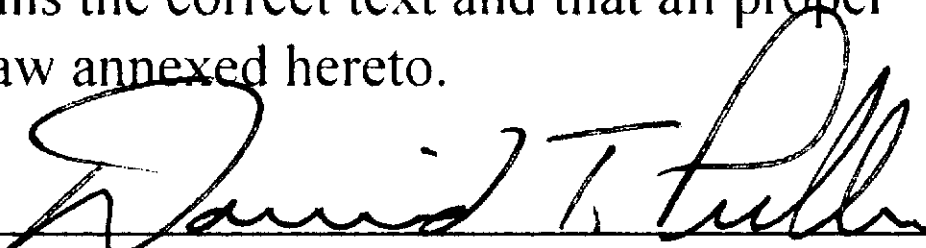
**(Seal)**

Date: December 29, 2009

**(Certification to be executed by County Attorney, Corporation Counsel, Town Attorney, Village Attorney or other authorized attorney of locality.)**

STATE OF NEW YORK  
COUNTY OF ALLEGANY

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing local law contains the correct text and that all proper proceedings have been had or taken for the enactment of the local law annexed hereto.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature **David T. Pullen**

Town Attorney \_\_\_\_\_  
Title

County \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
of Hartsville  
Town \_\_\_\_\_  
Village \_\_\_\_\_

Date: December 29, 2009

Local Law No. 2 of 2009  
Wind Energy Facilities

Be it hereby enacted by the Town Board of the Town of Hartsville as follows:

**SECTION 1:** Local Law No. 1 of 2007, entitled “WIND ENERGY FACILITIES LOCAL LAW,” is hereby repealed in its entirety and replaced with Local Law No. 2 of 2009, adopted to read in its entirety as follows:

**ARTICLE I**

**§1 . Title**

This Local Law may be cited as the “Wind Energy Facilities Local Law” of the Town of Hartsville, New York.

**§2. Purpose**

The Town Board of the Town of Hartsville adopts this Local Law to promote the appropriate use of the Town’s wind energy resource through Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs), and to regulate the placement of such systems so that the public health, safety, and welfare will not be jeopardized.

**§3. Authority**

The Town Board of the Town of Hartsville enacts this Local Law under the authority granted by:

- i. Article IX of the New York State Constitution, § 2 (c)(6) and (10)
- ii. New York Statute of Local Governments, § 10 (1) and (7).
- iii. New York Municipal Home Rule Law, § 10 (1)(i) and (ii) and § 10(1)(a)(6), (11), (12), and (14).
- iv. New York Town Law §130(1) (Building Code), (3) (Electrical Code), (5) (Fire Prevention), (7) (Use of Streets and Highways), (7-a) (Location of Driveways), (11) (Peace, Good Order and Safety), (15) (Promotion of Public Welfare), (15-a) (Excavated Lands), (16) (Unsafe Buildings), (19) (Trespass), and (25) (Building Lines).
- v. New York Town Law §64(17-a) (Protection of Aesthetic Interests), (23) (General Powers).

**§4. Findings**

a. The Town Board of the Town of Hartsville finds and declares that:

- i. Wind energy is a renewable energy resource of the Town and its conversion to electricity may

reduce dependence on nonrenewable energy sources and decrease the air and water pollution that results from the use of conventional energy sources. However, wind energy facilities should be sited in a way that protects the health and safety needs of the Town residents residing near the large wind turbines, as well as the general public. Therefore, the studies and research reports listed in an Appendix to this Local Law were consulted to support the findings below.

ii. The generation of electricity from properly sited wind turbines, including small systems, can be cost effective, and in many cases existing power distribution systems can be used to transmit electricity from wind generating stations to utilities or other users.

iii. Regulation of the siting and installation of wind turbines is necessary for the purpose of protecting the health, safety, and welfare of neighboring property owners and the general public.

iv. Wind turbines represent significant potential aesthetic impacts because of their large size, lighting, noise and shadow effects, if not properly sited.

v. If not properly regulated, installation of Wind Energy Facilities can create drainage problems through erosion and lack of sediment control for facility and access road sites, and harm farmlands through improper construction methods.

vi. Wind turbines may present a risk to bird and bat populations if not properly sited.

vii. Wind turbines may be significant sources of noise, which, if unregulated, can negatively impact adjoining properties.

viii. Without proper planning, construction of Wind Energy Facilities can create vehicular traffic problems and damage local roads.

ix. If improperly sited, wind turbines can interfere with certain types of communications.

x. Wind turbines may be significant sources of noise, which, if it is not properly and adequately regulated, can negatively impact human health.

xi. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation recommends that noise increases in non-industrial areas like Hartsville be limited to 6 dBA over background. See NYSDEC (2001), pg. 14.

xii. Background sound levels in rural residential areas in New York are commonly in the range of 20 dBA to 30 dBA at night. See Kamperman and James (2008), pg. 2.

xiii. Minimum setbacks from dwellings are necessary to mitigate noise impacts. Pre-construction sound models in the past have failed to accurately predict wind turbine noise impacts. This is apparent in the experience with wind farms in Cohocton, Steuben County, New York. This may be due to factors such as atmospheric conditions, temperature inversions, wind layers, geography and low frequency noise which travels further with greater intensity than higher

frequency noise. In addition, at night when air stabilizes near ground level, elevated wind turbine noise can travel further than expected and can be 5-15 dB(A) louder than predicted with conventional models. (See Kamperman and James 2008; Acoustic Ecology Institute Special Report: Wind Energy Noise Impacts 2008).

xiv. A C-weighted sound determination (dBC) is needed to minimize adverse health effects from low frequency noise. A dBC requirement will likely result in setbacks between large wind turbines and nearby dwellings of 1 km, (0.62 miles) or greater for 1.5 to 3 MW wind turbines if wind turbines are located in rural areas where L90A background levels are close to 30 dBA. (See Kamperman & James; WHO 1999; Bajdek Noise-Con 2007; Pedersen and Waye 2008).

xv. Noise diminishes with distance. According to a sound propagation formula in Wind Turbine Acoustic Noise White Paper by the University of Massachusetts Renewable Energy Research Lab, a sound power level (SPL) of 35 dBA is reached at approximately ½ mile from a wind turbine based on a sound power of 102 dBA at hub height for 1.5 to 3 MW wind turbines. Therefore, at a distance of less than ½ mile, a wind turbine will create a SPL that exceeds safe levels. (See Rogers 2006, pg. 18, Figure 11; Burton 2001).

xvi. While mechanical sounds of wind turbines have been reduced by modern designs, aerodynamic sounds by air turbulence around the turbine blades have increased with increasing turbine size. Therefore, this local law requires siting based not only on set-backs, but also on numerical noise limits.

xvii. The closer people live to wind turbines the more likely they will experience noise annoyance or develop adverse health effects from wind turbine noise. This has been demonstrated by the on-going problems reported by residents in the nearby Town of Cohocton in which industrial wind energy facilities have become operational over the past year. This has also been demonstrated by continuing reports of problems related to noise at other recent wind energy projects throughout the United States. Further, the degree of difficulties resulting from the sound of wind turbines seems clearly related to the distance from the turbines, though the literature has studied a variety of turbine sizes in a variety of locations. A setback of 2,460 feet from dwellings would eliminate most noise complaints. Research conducted by Bajdek (2007) showed that at approximately 0.8 km (½ mile) from wind turbines, 44% of the population would be highly annoyed by wind turbine noise. At a distance of approximately 1.62 km (1 mile) from wind turbines, the percent of highly annoyed people is expected to drop to 4%. Kamperman and James reviewed several studies to determine the impact of wind turbine noise on nearby residents. Their review showed that some residents living as far as two miles from wind turbines complained of sleep disturbance from turbine noise and many residents living 1,000 feet from wind turbines experienced major sleep disruption and other health problems from nighttime turbine noise. Van den Berg (2006) studied a wind farm in northwestern Germany and discovered that residents living 500 meters (1,640 feet) from the wind turbines reacted strongly to wind turbine noise and residents up to 1,900 meters (1.18 miles) from the wind turbines expressed annoyance. A survey conducted by Pedersen and Waye (2008) found that less than 10% of the respondents experienced sleep disturbance at distances of 1,984 feet to 3,325 feet and found that the sound from wind turbines was of greater concern in rural environments because of



the lower ambient noise. The Town of Hartsville notes with approval that wind project developer E.On Renewables (2007) has stated on its website that the minimum distance between a wind turbine location and the nearest dwelling should be at least 750 meters (2,461 feet).

xviii. Several studies recommend wind turbines be located between ½ mile to over 1 mile from dwellings. To avoid adverse noise impacts, the Western Australia Planning Commission Bulletin recommends that wind energy systems include sufficient buffers or setbacks to dwellings of 1 km (0.62 mile). The National Wind Collaborating Committee states that an appropriate setback distance may be up to ½ mile. The National Research Council states noise produced by wind turbines generally is not a major concern for humans beyond one mile or so because various measures to reduce noise have been implemented in the design of modern turbines. The Wisconsin towns of Woodville, Clay Banks, Magnolia, Wilton and Ridgeville recently adopted large wind turbine ordinances with setbacks of ½ mile from dwellings. The French National Academy of Medicine and the UK Noise Association suggest a 1.5 km (approximately 1 mile) distance between large wind turbines and dwellings. See Gueniot (2006). Dr. Amanda Harry (2007), Dr. Nina Pierpont (2006), and Frey and Hadden (2007) recommend a setback greater than 1 mile.

xix. Adverse health effects from wind turbine noise can be exacerbated by the rotating blades and shadows from the wind turbines. As wind turbine blades rotate in front of a rising or setting sun, they cast a strobe-like flicker that cannot be avoided by occupants. Shadow flicker can cause some people to become dizzy, nauseated or lose their balance when they see the movement of the shadow. Shadow flicker from wind turbines at greater than 3 Hz poses a potential risk of inducing photosensitive seizures. Therefore, wind turbines should be sited such that shadows from wind turbine blades do not fall upon the windows of nearby dwellings or within 100 feet of dwellings for any considerable period. The National Wind Coordinating Committee (1998) recommends a setback of 10 rotor diameters to avoid shadow flicker on occupied structures. See also Cummings (2008); Burton et al. (2001); UK Noise Association (2006); Harding (2008); and Pierpont (2006a and 2006b).

xx. If placed too close to a road, the movement of the wind turbine blades and resulting shadow flicker can distract drivers and lead to accidents. See National Research Council (2007), pg. 161.

xxi. The New York State Attorney General has found it necessary to seek compliance by wind farm developers to a code of conduct that specifically addresses complaints regarding wind farm development from citizens, groups and public officials alleging improper relationships between wind companies and local officials; however, the Attorney General's Code of Conduct for wind developers may not be sufficient to obtain disclosure of past and present relationships between wind companies and local officials in Hartsville.

xxii. It is reasonable to expect that parties that are either in favor of greater protections or greater accommodation of wind projects will litigate town action under this local law, the adoption of the local law, or both; and that disputes about the implementation and enforcement of the

standards established under the local law, should an application for a local permit be approved, could be costly to the Town.

## **§5. Definitions**

As used in this Local Law, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

**AGRICULTURAL OR FARM OPERATIONS** - means the land and on-farm buildings, equipment, manure processing and handling facilities, and practices which contribute to the production, preparation and marketing of crops, livestock and livestock products as a commercial enterprise, including a commercial horse boarding operation as defined in subdivision thirteen of this section and “timber processing” as defined in subdivision fourteen of this section. Such farm operation may consist of one or more parcels of owned or rented land, which parcels may be contiguous or noncontiguous to each other.

**AMBIENT SOUND** - Ambient sound encompasses all sound present in a given environment, being usually a composite of sounds from many sources near and far. It includes intermittent noise events, such as, from aircraft flying over, dogs barking, wind gusts, mobile farm or construction machinery, and the occasional vehicle traveling along a nearby road. The ambient also includes insect and other nearby sounds from birds and animals or people. The near-by and transient events are part of the ambient sound environment but are not to be considered part of the long term background sound.

**ANSI** - refers to or means the AMERICAN NATIONAL STANDARDS INSTITUTE.

**APPLICANT** - means the individual or business entity that seeks to secure a license under this section of the Town municipal code.

**A-WEIGHTED SOUND LEVEL (dBA)** - A measure of over-all sound pressure level designed to reflect the response of the human ear, which does not respond equally to all frequencies. It is used to describe sound in a manner representative of the human ear's response. It reduces the effects of the low with respect to the frequencies centered around 1000 Hz. The resultant sound level is said to be “Weighted” and the units are “dBA.” Sound level meters have an A-weighting network for measuring A-weighted sound levels (dBA) meeting the characteristics and weighting specified in ANSI Specifications for Integrating Averaging Sound Level Meters, 51.43-1997 for Type 1 instruments and be capable of accurate readings (corrections for internal noise and microphone response permitted) at 20 dBA or lower. In this document dBA means LAeq unless specified otherwise.

**BACKGROUND SOUND ( $L_{90}$ )** - refers to the sound level present at least 90% of the time. Background sounds are those heard during lulls in the ambient sound environment. That is, when transient sounds from flora, fauna, and wind are not present. Background sound levels vary during different times of the day and night. Because WTG operates 24/7 the background sound levels of interest are those during the quieter periods which are often the evening and night. Sounds from the WTG of interest, near-by birds and animals or people must be excluded from



the background sound test data. Nearby electrical noise from streetlights, transformers and cycling AC units and pumps etc. must also be excluded from the background sound test data. Background sound level (dBA and dBC (as  $L_{90}$  )) is the sound level present 90% of the time during a period of observation that is representative of the quiet time for the soundscape under evaluation and with duration of ten (10) continuous minutes. Several contiguous ten (10) minute tests may be performed in one hour to determine the statistical stability of the sound environment. Measurement periods such as at dusk when bird and insect activity is high or the early morning hours when the 'dawn chorus' is present are not acceptable measurement times. Longer term sound level averaging tests, such as 24 hours or multiple days are not at all appropriate since the purpose is to define the quiet time background sound level. It is defined by the  $L_{A90}$  and  $L_{C90}$  descriptors. It may be considered as the quietest one (1) minute during a ten (10) minute test.  $L_{A90}$  results are valid only when  $L_{A10}$  results are no more than 10 dB above  $L_{A90}$  for the same period.  $L_{A10}$  less  $L_{C90}$  that exceed 10 dB are deemed to be invalid. The background noise environment consists of a multitude of distant sources of sound. When a new nearby source is introduced the new background noise level would be increased. The addition of a new source with a noise level 10 below the existing background would increase the new background 0.4 dB. If the new source has the same noise level as the existing background then the new background is increased 3.0 dB. Lastly, if the new source is 3.3 dB above the existing background then the new background would have increased 5 dB. For example, to meet the requirement of  $L_{90A} + 5 \text{ dB} = 31 \text{ dBA}$  if the existing quiet nighttime background sound level is 26 dBA, the maximum wind turbine noise immission contribution independent of the background cannot exceed 29.3 dBA  $L_{eq}$  at a dwelling. When adding decibels, a 26 dBA background combined with 29.3 dBA from the turbines (without background) results in 31 dBA. In addition, background  $L_{90}$  sound levels documenting the pre-construction baseline conditions should be determined when the ten (10) minute maximum wind speed is less than 2 m/s (4.5 mph) near ground level/microphone location 1.5 m height.

**C-WEIGHTED SOUND LEVEL (dBC)** - Similar in concept to the A-Weighted sound Level (dBA) but C-weighting does not de-emphasize the frequencies below 1k Hz as A-weighting does. It is used for measurements that must include the contribution of low frequencies in a single number representing the entire frequency spectrum. Sound level meters have a C-weighting network for measuring C-weighted sound levels (dBC) meeting the characteristics and weighting specified in ANSI S1.43-1997 Specifications for Integrating Averaging Sound Level Meters for Type 1 instruments. In this document dBC means  $L_{ag}$  unless specified otherwise.

**DECIBEL (dB)** - A dimensionless unit which denotes the ratio between two quantities that are proportional to power, energy or intensity. One of these quantities is a designated reference by which all other quantities of identical units are divided. The sound pressure level ( $L_p$ ) in decibels is equal to 10 times the logarithm (to the base 10) of the ratio between the pressure squared divided by the reference pressure squared. The reference pressure used in acoustics is 20 MicroPascals.

**EAF** - Environmental Assessment Form used in the implementation of the SEQRA as that term is defined in Part 617 of Title 6 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations.

**FREQUENCY** - The number of oscillations or cycles per unit of time. Acoustical frequency is usually expressed in units of Hertz (Hz) where one Hz is equal to one cycle per second.

**HEIGHT** -means the total distance measured from the grade of the property as existed prior to the construction of the wind energy system, facility, tower, turbine, or related facility at the base to its highest point. Height shall include the blade extended in a fully vertical position.

**HERTZ (Hz)** - Frequency of sound expressed by cycles per second.

**INFRA -SOUND** -sound with energy in the frequency range of 0-20 Hz is considered to be infra-sound. It is normally considered to not be audible for most people unless in relatively high amplitude. However, there is a wide range between the most sensitive and least sensitive people to perception of sound and perception is not limited to stimulus of the auditory senses. The most significant exterior noise induced dwelling vibration occurs in the frequency range between 5 Hz and 50 Hz. Moreover, levels below the threshold of audibility can still cause measurable resonances inside dwelling interiors. Conditions that support or magnify resonance may also exist in human body cavities and organs under certain conditions. See low-frequency noise (LFN) for more information.

$L_{eq}$  - means the equivalent steady-state sound level which contains the same acoustic energy as the time varying sound level during a one-hour period. It is not necessary that the measurements be taken over a full one-hour time interval, but sufficient measurements must be available to allow a valid extrapolation to a one-hour time interval. [taken verbatim from NYSDEC landfill regulations, 6 NYCRR § 260.1.14(p)]  $L_{eq}$  must be reported as an A-weighted or C-weighted sound level, as appropriate, i.e.,  $L_{Aeq}$  or  $L_{ceq}$ . For more information, see “Statistical Noise Levels,” below.

**LOW FREQUENCY NOISE (LFN)** - refers to sounds with energy in the lower frequency range of 20 to 200 Hz. LFN is deemed to be excessive when the difference between a C-weighted sound level and an A-weighted sound level is greater than 20 decibels at any measurement point outside a residence or other occupied structure.

**MEASUREMENT POINT (MP)** - means location where sound measurements are taken such that no significant obstruction blocks sound from the site. The Measurement Point should be located so as to not be near large objects such as buildings and in the line-of-sight to the nearest turbines. Proximity to large buildings or other structures should be twice the largest dimension of the structure, if possible. Measurement Points should be at quiet locations remote from street lights, transformers, street traffic, flowing water and other local noise sources.

**MEASUREMENT WIND SPEED** - For measurements conducted to establish the background noise levels ( $L_{A90\ 10\ min}$ ,  $L_{C90\ 10\ min}$ , etc.) the maximum wind speed, sampled within 5 meters (m) of the microphone and at its height, shall be less than 2 meters per second (m/s) (4.5 mph) for valid background measurements. For valid wind farm noises measurements conducted to establish the post-construction sound level the maximum wind speed, sampled within 5m of the microphone and at its height, shall be less than 4m/s (9 mph). The wind speed at the WTG blade

height shall be at or above the nominal rated wind speed and operating in its highest sound output mode. For purposes of enforcement, the wind speed and direction at the WTG blade height shall be selected to reproduce the conditions leading to the enforcement action while also restricting maximum wind speeds at the microphone to less than 4 m/s (9 mph). For purposes of models used to predict the sound levels and sound pressure levels of the WTG to be submitted with the Application, the wind speed shall be the speed that will result in the worst-case  $L_{Aeq}$  and  $L_{Ceq}$  sound levels at the nearest non-participating properties to the WTG. If there may be more than one set of nearby sensitive receptors, models for each such condition shall be evaluated and the results shall be included in the Application.

**MUNICIPAL OFFICER** - means any officer or employee of a municipality, whether paid or unpaid and includes, without limitation, members of any office, board, body, advisory board, council, commission, agency, department, district, administration, division, bureau, or committee of the municipality. "Municipal Officer" also includes any entity that is directly or indirectly controlled by, or is under common control with, such officer or employee.

**NOISE** -means any unwanted sound. Not all noise needs to be excessively loud to represent an annoyance or interference.

**PROJECT BOUNDARY** - means the external property boundaries of parcels owned by or leased by the WTG developers. It is represented on a plot plan view by a continuous line encompassing all WTG(s) and related equipment associated with the WTG project.

**PROPERTY LINE** - means the recognized and mapped property parcel boundary line.

**PROPERTY OWNER** - means the owner of a parcel within the project boundary.

**QUALIFIED INDEPENDENT ACOUSTICAL CONSULTANT** - means a consultant selected and hired by the Town Board meeting the following requirements. Qualifications include, at a minimum, demonstration of competence in the specialty of community noise testing. An example is a person with Full Membership in the Institute of Noise Control Engineers (INCE). There are scientists and engineers in other professional fields that have been called upon by their local community for help in the development of a WTG Noise Ordinance. Many of these scientists and engineers have recently spent hundreds of hours learning many important aspects of noise related to the introduction of WTG into their communities. Then with field measurement experience with background data and wind turbine noise emission, they have become qualified independent acoustical consultants for WTG siting. Certifications such as Professional Engineer (P.E.) do not test for competence in acoustical principles and measurement and are thus not, without further qualification, appropriate for work under this document. The Qualified Independent Acoustical Consultant can have no financial or other connection to a WTG developer or related company.

**RESIDENCE** -means any structure used for human habitation on a regular ongoing basis, which is identified by property code numbers 113, 114, 210, 240, 270, 271, and 280 on the official Assessment Roll of the Assessor of the Town of Hartsville. However, if evidence is provided

that any such structures are not habitable, the Town may on a case-by-case basis deem such structures not to be residences. Properties with a validly issued building permit for such a structure shall be deemed to be residences for purposes of this local law.

**SENSITIVE RECEPTOR** - means a place or property intended for human habitation, whether inhabited or not, including but not limited to public parks, state and federal wildlife areas, the manicured areas of recreational establishments designed for public use, including but not limited to golf courses, camp grounds and other nonagricultural state or federal licensed businesses, hunting grounds, whether private or public, schools, daycare centers, elder care facilities, hospitals, places of seated assemblage, non-agricultural businesses and residences. These areas are more likely to be sensitive to the exposure of the noise, shadow or flicker, etc. generated by a WTG or WTGF.

**SEQRA** - the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act and its implementing regulations in Title 6 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, Part 617.

**SITE** - the parcel(s) of land where a Wind Energy Facility is to be placed. The Site can be publicly or privately owned by an individual or a group of individuals controlling single or adjacent properties. Where multiple lots are in joint ownership, the combined lots shall be considered as one for purposes of applying setback requirements. Any property which has a Wind Energy Facility or has entered into an agreement for said Facility or a setback agreement shall be considered a site.

**SMALL WIND TURBINE GENERATOR** - (“Small WTG”) - a wind turbine generator consisting of a wind turbine, a tower, and associated control or conversion electronics, which has a rated capacity of not more than 100 kW and which is intended to primarily reduce consumption of utility power at the site.

**STATISTICAL NOISE LEVELS** - Sounds that vary in level over time, such as road traffic noise and most community noise, are commonly described in terms of the statistical exceedance levels  $L_{NA}$ , where  $L_{NA}$  is the A-weighted sound level exceeded for N% of a given measurement period. For example,  $L_{10}$  is the noise level exceeded for 10% of the time. Of particular relevance, are:  $L_{A10}$  and  $L_{C10}$  the noise level exceed for 10% of the ten (10) minute interval. This is commonly referred to as the average maximum noise level.  $L_{A90}$  and  $L_{C90}$  are the A-weighted and C-weighted sound levels exceeded for 90% of the ten (10) minute sample period. The L90 noise level is defined by ANSI as the long-term background sound level (i.e. the sounds one hears in the absence of the noise source under consideration and without short term or near-by sounds from other sources), or simply the “background level.”  $L_{eq}$  is the A-weighted or C-weighted equivalent noise level (the “average” noise level). It is defined as the steady sound level that contains the same amount of acoustical energy as the corresponding time-varying sound.

**WIND TURBINE GENERATOR** (“WTG”) - a machine that converts the kinetic energy of the wind into electricity available for use beyond that used by the machine (commonly known as a “wind turbine” or “windmill”).



WIND TURBINE ENERGY FACILITY - any WTG, Small WTG, or Wind Measurement Tower, including all related infrastructure, electrical lines and substations, access roads and accessory structures.

**§6. Permits Required; Transfer; Modifications**

a. Permit Requirements.

i. No Wind Energy Facility shall be constructed or operated in the Town of Hartsville except in compliance with this Local Law.

ii. No WTG shall be constructed or operated in the Town of Hartsville except with a Wind Energy Facility Permit approved pursuant to this Local Law.

iii. No Wind Measurement Tower shall be constructed in the Town of Hartsville except pursuant to a Wind Energy Facility Permit issued pursuant to this Local Law.

iv. No Small WTG shall be constructed or operated in the Town of Hartsville except pursuant to a Wind Energy Permit issued pursuant to this Local Law.

b. Applicability. This Local Law shall apply to all areas of the Town of Hartsville.

c. Agricultural Use Exemption. No permit or other approval shall be required under this Chapter for WTG utilized solely for agricultural operations in a state or county agricultural district, as long as the facility is set back at least one time its Total Height from a property line, and does not exceed 120 feet in height. Towers over 120 feet in Total Height utilized solely for agricultural operations in a state or county agricultural district shall apply for a special use permit in accordance with Article II of this Local Law, but shall not require a height variance. Prior to the construction of a WTG under this exemption, the property owner or a designated agent shall submit a sketch plan or building permit application to the Town to demonstrate compliance with the setback requirements.

d. Transfer. Transfer of any Wind Energy Facility or Wind Energy Permit to an entity other than the applicant to whom the permit was issued shall require approval of the Town, which approval shall be granted upon written acceptance of the transferee of the obligations of the transferor under this Local Law. No transfer shall eliminate the liability of an applicant nor of any other party under this Local Law.

e. Facility Modifications. Notwithstanding the requirements of this Section, replacement in kind or modification of a Wind Energy Facility may occur without Town Board approval when (i) there will be no increase in Total Height; (ii) no change in the location of the WTG; (iii) no additional lighting or change in facility color; and (iv) no increase in noise produced by the WTG.

## **§ 7. Applicability**

- a. The requirements of this Local Law shall apply to all Wind Energy Facilities not permitted by the Town before the effective date of this Local Law
- b. Wind Energy Facilities for which a required permit has been properly issued and upon which construction has commenced prior to the effective date of this Local Law, shall not be required to meet the requirements of this Local Law; provided, however, that
  - i. Any such pre-existing Wind Energy Facility which does not provide energy for a continuous period of twelve (12) months shall be required to submit a new application before recommencing operations or production of energy from such facility, and must comply with all requirements of this local law.
  - ii. No modification or alteration to an existing Wind Energy Facility shall be allowed without full compliance with this Local Law.

## **ARTICLE II. WIND TURBINE GENERATORS (WTG)**

### **§8. Applications for Wind Energy Permits for Wind Turbine Generators**

- a. Application Contents.
  - i. Applicant Information. Name, address, telephone number of the applicant. If the applicant is represented by an agent, the application shall include the name, address and telephone number of the agent as well as an original signature of the applicant authorizing the representation.
  - ii. Property Owner Information and Authorization. Name, address, telephone number of property owner. If the property owner is not the applicant, the application shall include proof of a recorded lease or easement with each participating landowner.
  - iii. Adjacent Owners. A list of property owners, with their mailing address, within 500 feet of the boundaries of the project boundaries identifying each as participants or non-participants in the project.
  - iv. Parcel Information. Address, or other property identification, of each proposed tower location, including tax map section, block and lot number.
  - v. Project Description. A description of the project, including the number and maximum rated capacity of each WTG.
  - vi. Plot Plans. A set of plot plans containing sufficient detail to clearly describe the



following:

- (1) Property lines and physical dimensions of the Site, including the project boundary;
- (2) Locations of all proposed facilities, including WTG, access roads, electrical lines, substations, storage or maintenance units, and fencing.
- (3) Locations of Residences and other permanent structures on the Site and within five hundred (500) feet of the Site boundaries.
- (4) Locations of parcels adjoining the Site.
- (5) Locations of public roads on the Site.
- (6) Locations of all aboveground utility lines on the Site.
- (7) To demonstrate compliance with the setback requirements of this Article, circles drawn around each proposed WTG location equal to two thousand four hundred sixty (2,460) foot radius.

vii. Wind Turbine Information. One drawing or other set of information may be submitted for each WTG of the same type and Total Height. For each type of WTG proposed, the application shall include:

- (1) A vertical drawing of the WTG showing Total Height, turbine dimensions, tower and turbine colors, distance between ground and lowest point of any blade, location of climbing pegs, and access doors.
- (2) Make, model, picture and manufacturer's specifications, including information on noise levels during WTG operation.
- (3) Manufacturer's Material Safety Data Sheet documentation for the type and quality of all materials used in the operation of all equipment including, but not limited to, all lubricants and coolants.

viii. Landscaping Plan. A plan depicting existing vegetation and describing any areas to be cleared and the specimens proposed to be added.

ix. Lighting Plan. A plan showing any FAA- required lighting and other proposed lighting.

x. Decommissioning Plan. The applicant shall submit a decommissioning plan, which shall include: (i) the anticipated life of the WTG; (ii) the estimated decommissioning cost

in current dollars; (iii) how said estimate was determined; (iv) the method of ensuring that funds will be available for decommissioning and restoration; (v) the method that the decommissioning cost will be kept current; and (vi) the manner in which the WTG will be decommissioned and the Site restored.

xi. Complaint Resolution Plan. The application will include a complaint resolution process to address complaints from nearby residents that includes the following:

- (1) The owner/operator of the WTG shall respond within five (5) business days after notified of a noise complaint by any property owner within the project boundary and a one-mile radius beyond the project boundary.
- (2) Sound tests, including background sound level and operating sound level at the complainant's property boundary, shall be performed by a qualified independent acoustical consultant acceptable to the complainant and the local agency charged with enforcement of this local law.
- (3) Testing shall commence within ten (10) working days of the complaint. If testing cannot be initiated within ten (10) days, it shall be initiated within a reasonable time under the circumstances.
- (4) A copy of the test results shall be sent to the property owner, and the Town Board within thirty (30) days of test completion.
- (5) If a Complaint is made, the presumption shall be that it is reasonable. The Town Code Enforcement Officer shall undertake an investigation of the alleged operational violation by a qualified individual acceptable to the Town Board.

xii. Construction Information. An application shall include information relating to the construction/installation of the wind energy conversion facility as follows:

- (1) A construction schedule describing commencement and completion dates; and
- (2) A description of the routes to be used by construction and delivery vehicles, the gross weights and heights of the loaded vehicles.

xiii. EAF. Completed Part 1 of the Full EAF as required by SEQRA.

xiv. Signed Statement. A statement, signed under penalties of perjury, that the information contained in the application is true and accurate.

xv. All return receipts required pursuant to Section 14 of this Wind Energy Facilities Local Law.

xvi. A baseline road quality study that complies with the requirements of Section 12(b) of this local law.

b. Positive Declaration. If the applicant agrees in writing in the application that the proposed WTG may have a significant adverse impact on the environment, the Town Board may issue a positive declaration of environmental significance.

c. Environmental Studies. If a positive declaration of environmental significance is determined by the SEQRA lead agency, the following information shall be included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) prepared for a Wind Energy Facility. Otherwise, the following studies shall be submitted to the Town Board for its use in reviewing the application:

i. Visual Impact Assessment. A visual impact assessment (VIA) of the proposed WTG as installed, which may include a computerized photographic simulation, demonstrating any visual impacts from strategic vantage points. The VIA shall include: (i) color photographs of the proposed Site from at least two locations accurately depicting the existing and proposed conditions, and (ii) a map showing locations where proposed WTG could be visible.

ii. Shadow Flicker Study. A study on potential shadows from the WTG. The study shall identify locations where shadows could be caused by the WTG and the expected durations of the shadows at these locations.

iii. Communications Impacts. An assessment of potential interference of the proposed WTG with microwave, radio, television, personal communication systems and other wireless communication.

iv. Fire Protection Plan. A fire protection and emergency response plan, created in consultation with the fire department(s) having jurisdiction over the proposed Site.

v. Noise Study. The application will include a study of potential noise impacts that includes the following:

(1) Preconstruction Background Noise Survey. The Town reserves the right to require the preparation of a preconstruction noise survey for each proposed WTG location conducted per procedures provided in the section on Measurement Procedures in George Kamperman and Richard R. James, Simple guidelines for siting wind turbines to prevent health risks, The Institute of Noise Control Engineering of the USA, 117 Proceedings of NOISE-CON 2008, Dearborn, Michigan, to determine long term background  $L_{A90}$  and  $L_{C90}$  sound levels. These Measurement Procedures are included in an Appendix to this Wind Energy Facilities Local Law. A Preconstruction Background Noise Survey that complies with these procedures must be completed and accepted prior to approval of the final layout and issuance of project permits.

a. If any proposed wind farm project locates a WTG within two miles of a sensitive receptor the survey as provided in the previous paragraph is mandatory. The survey shall be conducted by a Qualified Independent Acoustical Consultant.

b. The applicant shall be responsible for paying the reasonable fees of the Qualified Independent Acoustical Consultant and costs associated with conducting the survey. These fees and cost shall be negotiated with the consultant and determined prior to any work being done on the survey. The applicant shall be required to set aside 100% of these fees in an escrow account managed by the Town Board before the survey is commenced by the consultant. Payment for this survey does not require the WTG developer's acceptance of the survey's results.

c. The applicant shall calculate, model or otherwise estimate  $L_{Aeq}$  and  $L_{Ceq}$  sound levels using the criteria in §13. Sound Levels and WTG Setbacks in accordance with ANSI standards. If the estimate shows that the predicted  $L_{Aeq}$  and  $L_{Ceq}$  sound levels exceed any of the criteria specified in Section 13 of this Wind Energy Facilities Local Law then the application cannot be approved.

d. Standardized acoustical instrumentation and sound measurement protocol shall meet all the requirements of the following ANSI Standards:

1. ANSI S1.43 Integrating Averaging Sound Level Meters: Type-1 (or IEC 61672-1)
2. ANSI S1.11 Specification for Octave and One-third Octave-Band Filters (or IEC 61260)
3. ANSI S1.40 Verification Procedures for Sound Calibrators
4. ANSI 512.9 Part 3 Procedures for Measurement of Environmental Sound
5. ANSI S12.18 Measurement of Outdoor Sound Pressure Level
6. IEC 61400-11 Wind turbine generator systems -Part 11: Acoustic noise measurements

(2) The Town Board will refer the application to the Town's engineer (if qualified in acoustics) or a qualified independent acoustical consultant for further review and comparison of the long term background sound levels against the predicted  $L_{Aeq}$  and  $L_{Ceq}$  sound levels reported for the model using the criteria in §13. Sound Levels and WTG Setbacks. The reasonably necessary costs associated with

such a review shall be the responsibility of the applicant, in accordance with the terms of this Wind Energy Facilities Local Law.

(3) Post Construction Noise Measurement Requirements.

a. Sound Regulations Compliance: A WTG shall be considered in violation of this Wind Energy Facilities Local Law or its permit unless the applicant demonstrates that the project complies with all sound level limits using the procedures specified in this local law. Sound levels in excess of the limits established in this local law shall be grounds for the Town Board to order immediate shut down of all noncompliant WTG units.

b. Post-Construction Sound Measurements: Within twelve months of the date when the project is fully operational, and within four weeks of the anniversary date of the pre-construction background noise measurements, the applicant must repeat the existing sound environment measurements taken before the project approval. Post-construction sound level measurements shall be taken both with all WTGs running and with all WTGs off. At the discretion of the Town, the preconstruction background sound levels ( $L_{90A}$  and  $L_{90C}$ ) can be substituted for the “all WTGs off” tests if a random sampling of 10% of the pre-construction study sites shows that background  $L_{90A}$  and  $L_{90C}$  conditions have increased less than 3 dB from those measured under the pre-construction nighttime conditions. The post-construction measurements will be reported to the Town Board (available for public review) using the same format as used for the preconstruction sound studies. Post-construction noise studies shall be conducted by a firm chosen and hired by the Town Board. Costs of these studies are to be reimbursed by the WTG applicant in a similar manner to that described above. The WTG applicant may ask to have its own consultant observe the publicly retained consultant at the convenience of the latter. The WTG applicant shall provide all technical information and wind farm data required by the qualified independent acoustical consultant before, during, and/or after any acoustical studies required by this document and for acoustical measurements.

d. Disclosure of Financial Interests. For any financial interest held by a Municipal Officer or his or her relative in any wind development company or its assets within ten years prior to the date of an application for a permit under this local law, the Wind Company shall disclose in a separate section of the application the Municipal Officer or his or her relative, the addresses of all persons included in the disclosure, and the nature and scope of the financial interest of each such person. The disclosure shall include all such instances of financial interest of which the Wind Company has knowledge, or through the exercise of reasonable diligence should know, and the format of the submission shall be subject to the approval of the town board.

e. Permit Fee and Other Fees and Costs. The permit fees required under Section 26 of this local law and a proposed Escrow Agreement required under Subsection 9(b) shall be submitted with the application required under this Section. The applicant is also responsible for all consulting and other fees and expenses that the Town incurs in processing the application.

## **§ 9. Application Review Process**

a. Pre-Application Meeting. Applicants may request a pre-application meeting with the Town Board or with any consultants retained by the Town Board for application review. Meeting with the Town Board shall be conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Law.

b. Escrow Agreement. The Town shall require the applicant to fund an escrow agreement to cover the amount by which the Town's cost to review the applicant's applications exceed the application fees paid by the applicant.

c. Application Submittal. Six copies of the application shall be submitted to the Town Clerk.

d. Application Completeness Review. Town staff or Town designated consultants shall, within 30 days of receipt, or such longer time if agreed to by the applicant, determine if all information and financial agreements required under this Article is included in the application.

i. Unless the Town Board waives any application requirement, no application shall be considered until deemed complete.

ii. If the application is deemed incomplete, the Town Board or its designated reviewer shall provide the applicant with a written statement listing the missing information. No refund of application fees shall be made, but no additional fees shall be required upon submittal of the additional information unless the number of WTG proposed is increased.

e. Board Receipt of Applications. Upon submission of a complete application, including the grant of any application waiver by the Town Board, the Town Clerk shall transmit the application to the Town Board.

f. Public Hearing. The Town Board shall hold at least one public hearing on the application.

i. The applicant shall provide notice of the public hearing by first class mail to property owners within ½ mile of the boundaries of the base of the WTG, and published in the Town's official newspaper, no less than ten nor more than twenty days before any hearing, but, where any hearing is adjourned by the Town Board to hear additional comments, no further publication or mailing shall be required. The applicant shall prepare and mail the Notice of Public Hearing prepared by the Town, and shall submit an affidavit of service. The assessment roll of the Town shall be used to determine mailing addresses.

ii. The public hearing may be combined with public hearings on any Environmental



Impact Statement or requested waivers.

g. County Planning Board Notice. Notice of the project shall also be given, when applicable, to the Steuben County Planning Board, if required by General Municipal law §§2394 and 239-m.

h. SEQRA Review. WTG applications shall be deemed Type I projects under SEQRA. The Town may conduct its SEQRA review in conjunction with other agencies, in which case the records of review by said agencies shall be part of the record of the Town's proceedings.

i. SEQRA Findings. At the completion of the SEQRA review process, if a positive declaration of environmental significance has been issued and an environmental impact statement prepared, the Town shall issue a Statement of Findings, which Statement may also serve as the Town's decision on the application.

j. Application Decision. Upon receipt of the recommendation of the County Planning Board (where applicable), the holding of the public hearing, and the completion of the SEQRA process, the Town Board may approve, approve with conditions, or deny the application, in accordance with the standards in this Article.

#### **§ 10. Standards for Wind Energy Facilities**

The following standards shall apply to all Wind Energy Facilities, unless specifically waived by the Town Board as part of a Wind Energy Permit.

a. Transmission Lines. All power transmission lines from the tower to any building or other structure shall be located underground to the maximum extent practicable.

b. WTG Height. The maximum Total Height of any WTG shall be 450 feet.

c. Antennae Co-Location. No television, radio or other communications antennas may be affixed or otherwise made part of any WTG, except pursuant to the Town Code. Applications may be jointly submitted for WTG and telecommunications facilities.

d. Advertising. No commercial advertising signs are allowed on any part of the Wind Energy Facility, including fencing and support structures.

e. WTG Lighting. No WTG shall have external lighting except to comply with government agency requirements. All such required lighting should restrict glare visible from ground level to the maximum extent possible be lit except to comply with FAA requirements.

f. Visual Impact Mitigation. Applicants shall use measures to reduce the visual impact of WTG to the extent possible.

i. WTG shall use tubular towers.

- ii. WTG shall be finished in a single, non-reflective matte finished color.
  - iii. WTG within a multiple WTG project shall be constructed using WTG whose appearance, with respect to one another, is similar within and throughout the project, to provide reasonable uniformity in overall size, geometry, and rotational speeds.
- g. Guy Wires. The use of guy wires for WTG is disfavored. A WTG using guy wires for tower support shall incorporate appropriate measures to protect the guy wires from damage which could cause tower failure.
- h. Microwave Links. No WTG shall be installed in any location along the major axis of an existing FCC-licensed microwave communications link where its operation is likely to interfere in the link's operation. If it is determined that a WTG is interfering with a microwave path, the WTG operator shall take the necessary corrective action to eliminate this interference including relocation or removal of the facilities, or resolution of the issue with the impacted parties. Failure to remedy interference with existing microwave links is grounds for revocation of the Wind Energy Permit for the specific WTG causing the interference.
- i. Waste Removal. Solid waste, hazardous waste and construction debris shall be removed from the Site and managed in a manner consistent with all appropriate rules and regulations.
- j. Clearing. Wind Energy Facilities shall be designed to minimize the impacts of land clearing and the loss of open space areas. Land protected by conservation easements shall be avoided when feasible. The use of previously developed areas will be given priority wherever possible.
- k. Wildlife. WTG shall be located in a manner that minimizes significant negative impacts on rare animal species in the vicinity, particularly bird and bat species.
- l. Wetlands. Wind Energy Facilities shall be located in a manner consistent with all applicable state and federal wetlands laws and regulations.
- m. Storm-water. Storm-water run-off and erosion control shall be managed in a manner consistent with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.
- n. Construction Times. Construction of the Wind Energy Facilities shall be limited to the hours of 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. except for certain activities that require cooler temperatures than possible during the day, subject to approval from the Town.
- o. Water Supply. Construction of Wind Energy Facilities shall be managed in a manner that minimizes the impact upon private and public, if any, water supplies.

## **§ 11. Required Safety Measures**

- a. Controls. Each WTG shall be equipped with both manual and automatic controls to limit the rotational speed of the rotor blade so it does not exceed the design limits of the rotor.

- b. Minimum Blade Height. The minimum distance between the ground and any part of the rotor or blade system shall be twenty (20) feet.
- c. Signs. Appropriate warning signs shall be posted. At least one sign shall be posted at the base of the tower warning of electrical shock or high voltage. The Town Board may require additional signs based on safety needs.
- d. Climbing Pegs. No climbing pegs or tower ladders shall be located closer than twelve (12) feet to the ground level at the base of the structure for freestanding single pole or guyed towers.
- e. Access Control. WTG shall be designed to prevent unauthorized external access to electrical and mechanical components and shall have access doors that are kept securely locked at all times.

## **§ 12. Roads and Traffic**

- a. Traffic Routes. Construction and delivery vehicles for WTG and Wind Energy Facilities shall use traffic routes established as part of the application review process. Factors in establishing such corridors shall include (i) minimizing traffic impacts from construction and delivery vehicles; (ii) minimizing WTG related traffic during times of school bus activity; (iii) minimizing wear and tear on local roads; and (iv) minimizing impacts on local business operations. Wind Energy Permit conditions may limit WTG-related traffic to specified routes, and include a plan for disseminating traffic route information to the public.
- b. Road Remediation. The applicant shall be responsible for remediation of damaged roads upon completion of the installation of WTG. A public improvement bond shall be posted prior to the issuance of any building permit in an amount, determined by the Town Board, sufficient to compensate the Town for any damage to local roads that is not corrected by the applicant. An applicant shall submit an estimate of costs for restoration to the pre-construction quality and character of local roads for the Town's approval prior to construction, and this estimate shall be the basis for the bond.

## **§ 13. Sound Levels and WTG Setbacks**

- a. Sound Levels. The statistical  $L_{Aeq}$  sound level generated by a WTG shall not exceed 6 dBA above the A-weighted background sound levels measured at the nearest non-participating property boundary, and the statistical  $L_{Ceq}$  sound level generated by a WTG shall not exceed 5 dBC above the C-weighted background sound levels measured at the nearest sensitive receptor located off the Site, measured from the property boundary of the receptor.
- b. Setbacks. Each WTG shall be located with the following minimum setbacks, as measured from the center of the WTG:
  - i. 2,460 feet from off-Site Residences, measured from the exterior of such Residence.

- ii. At least 1,000 feet from the nearest Nonparticipating property owner's property line.
- iii. 100 feet from state-identified wetlands, except where permits for other setbacks have been received from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, or from the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

#### **§ 14. Noise and Setback Easements**

a. In the event a Wind Energy Facility does not meet a setback requirement or exceeds noise or other criteria established in this Local law as it existed at the time the Wind Energy Permit is granted, a waiver will be granted from such requirement by the town board in the following circumstances:

- i. A notice, mailed by U.S.P.S. certified mail, return receipt, has been obtained by the applicant, stating the owner of the noncompliant property is aware of the Wind Energy Facility and the noise and/or setback limitations imposed by this Local Law, and that consent is granted to (i) allow noise levels to exceed the maximum limits otherwise allowed or (ii) setbacks less than required; and
- ii. A notice advising all subsequent owners as to the consent required in the previous subparagraph, in the form required for an easement, has been recorded in the County Clerk's Office describing the benefitted and burdened properties. Such notices or easements shall be permanent and shall state that they may not be revoked without the consent of the Town Board, which consent shall be granted upon either the completion of the decommissioning of the benefitted WTG in accordance with this Article, or the acquisition of the burdened parcel by the owner of the benefitted parcel or the WTG.
- iii. The Applicant has included all notices, easements and receipts required by this Section in its application materials.

#### **§15. Issuance of Wind Energy Permits**

- a. Upon completion of the review process, and subsequent to the execution of a PILOT Agreement, the Town Board shall, upon consideration of the standards in this Local Law and the record of the SEQRA review, issue a written decision with the reasons for approval, conditions of approval or disapproval fully stated.
- b. If approved, the Town Board will direct the Town Clerk to issue a Wind Energy Permit upon satisfaction of all conditions for said Permit, and direct the building inspector to issue a building permit, upon compliance with the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and the other pre-construction conditions of this Local Law.
- c. The decision of the Town Board shall be filed within five (5) days in the office of the Town Clerk and a copy mailed to the applicant by first class mail.

d. A Wind Energy Permit issued under this Article shall require an annual permit fee payable to the Town for the costs of administering the local law and impacts related to the presence of a permitted project in the Town, in the amount of \$4,000.00 per megawatt of rated capacity of all WTGs.

#### **§16. Limitations on Approvals; Easements on Town Property**

a. Wind Flow. Nothing in this Local Law shall be deemed to give any applicant the right to cut down surrounding trees and vegetation on any property to reduce turbulence and increase wind flow to the Wind Energy Facility. Nothing in this Local Law shall be deemed a guarantee against any future construction or Town approvals of future construction that may in any way impact the wind flow to any Wind Energy Facility. It shall be the sole responsibility of the Facility operator or owner to acquire any necessary wind flow or turbulence easements, or rights to remove vegetation.

b. Easements on Town Property. Pursuant to the powers granted to the Town to manage its own property, the Town may enter into noise, setback, or wind flow easements on such terms as the Town Board deems appropriate, as long as said agreements are not otherwise prohibited by state or local law.

#### **§ 17. Permit Revocation; Abatement**

a. Operation. A WTG shall be maintained in operational condition at all times, subject to reasonable maintenance and repair outages. Operational condition includes meeting all noise requirements and other permit conditions.

b. Violations of Permit Conditions. A WTG is non-compliant and must be shut down immediately if it exceeds any of the limits in Section 13 of this Wind Energy Facilities Local Law. Should a WTG violate a permit condition, the owner or operator shall remedy the situation within 90 days after written notice from the Town Board. The applicant shall have 90 days after written notice from the Town Board to cure any deficiency, and the Town Board may grant extensions of the 90 day cure period. A WTG that has not cured a deficiency within the time allotted must be decommissioned within 90 days following the cure period, including any extensions.

c. Public Hearing and Remedial Action. Notwithstanding any other abatement provision under this Local Law, if the WTG is not brought into permit compliance after said notice, the Town Board may, after a public meeting at which the operator or owner shall be given opportunity to be heard and present evidence, including a plan to come into compliance, (i) order either remedial action within a particular time frame, or (ii) order revocation of the Wind Energy Permit for the WTG and require the removal of the WTG within 90 days. If the WTG is not removed, the Town Board shall have the right to use the security posted as part of the Decommission Fund to remove the WTG.

d. Inoperative WTG. If any WTG remains non-functional or inoperative for the continuous



period of one (1) year, the applicant agrees that, without any further action by the Town Board, the applicant shall remove said WTG.

i. This provision shall not apply if the applicant demonstrates to the Town that it has been making good faith efforts to restore the WTG to an operable condition, but nothing in this provision shall limit the Town's ability to order a remedial action plan after public hearing.

ii. WTG non-function or lack of operation may be proven by reports to the Public Service Commission, NYSERDA, New York Independent System Operator, or by lack of income generation. Upon request of the Town Board, the applicant shall make available (subject to a non-disclosure agreement) to the Town Board, all reports to and from the purchaser of energy from individual WTG necessary to prove the WTG is functioning, which reports may be redacted as necessary to protect proprietary information.

e. WTG Removal and Remediation. WTG removal shall include removal of all aboveground equipment, removal of foundations to a depth of three (3.0) feet below grade, restoration of soil conditions, and restoration of vegetation to be consistent and compatible with surrounding vegetation.

f. Decommissioning Fund. The Permittee, or successors, shall continuously maintain a financial assurance mechanism for the costs of decommissioning and removal of all WTGs on site and the remediation of all disturbed areas of land sufficient to assure no discharge of sediments or other pollutants following decommissioning (decommissioning, removal and remediation) in a form approved by the Town, for the period of the life of the facility. The financial assurance mechanisms must ensure that funds will be available in a timely fashion when needed. The Permittee shall submit to the Town Board a detailed written estimate, in current dollars, of the cost of hiring a third party to decommission, remove and remediate the Site, due each year by the last of day of January. During the active life of the facility, the Permittee must annually adjust the cost estimate for inflation. All decommissioning, removal and remediation fund requirements shall be fully funded before a building permit is issued.

### **ARTICLE III. WIND MEASUREMENT TOWERS**

#### **§ 18. Wind Site Assessment**

The Town Board acknowledges that prior to construction of a WTG, a wind site assessment is conducted to determine the wind speeds and the feasibility of using particular Sites. Installation of Wind Measurement Towers, also known as meteorological ("Met") towers, shall be permitted on the issuance of a Wind Energy Permit in accordance with this Article.

#### **§ 19. Applications for Wind Measurement Towers**

a. Applications. An application for a Wind Measurement Tower shall include the following:



- i. Applicant Information. Name, address, telephone number of the applicant. If the applicant is represented by an agent, the application shall include the name, address and telephone number of the agent as well as an original signature of the applicant authorizing the representation.
- ii. Property Owner Information and Authorization. Name, address, telephone number of the property owner. If the property owner is not the applicant, the application shall include a letter or other written permission signed by the property owner (i) confirming that the property owner is familiar with the proposed applications and (ii) authorizing the submission of the application.
- iii. Site Information. Address of each proposed tower location, including tax map section, block and lot number.
- iv. Map. A map showing proposed location of the Wind Measurement Tower and any roads, parcel boundaries or structures within one times the height of the wind measurement tower.

## **§20. Standards for Wind Measurement Towers**

- a. Setback. The distance between a Wind Measurement Tower and the property line shall be at least one times the height of the wind measurement tower. Sites for a Wind Measurement Tower can include more than one piece of property and the requirement shall apply to the combined properties. Exceptions for neighboring property are also allowed with the consent of those property owners.
- b. Permit Duration. Wind Energy Permits for Wind Measurement Towers may be issued for a period of up to two years. Permits shall be renewable upon application to the Town Board.

## **ARTICLE IV. SMALL WTG**

### **§21. Purpose and intent**

The purpose of this Article is to provide standards for small WTG designed for home, farm, and small commercial use on the same parcel, and that are primarily used to reduce consumption of utility power at that location. The intent of this Article is to encourage the development of small wind energy systems and to protect the public health, safety, and community welfare.

### **§22. Applications**

- a. Applications for Small WTG Wind Energy permits shall include:
  - i. Applicant Information. Name, address, telephone number of the applicant. If the applicant is represented by an agent, the application shall include the name, address and

telephone number of the agent as well as an original signature of the applicant authorizing the representation.

ii. Property Owner Information and Authorization. Name, address, telephone number of the property owner. If the property owner is not the applicant, the application shall include a letter or other written permission signed by the property owner (i) confirming that the property owner is familiar with the proposed applications and (ii) authorizing the submission of the application.

iii. Site Information. Address of each proposed tower location, including tax map section, book and lot number.

iv. Height Information. Evidence that the proposed tower height does not exceed the height recommended by the manufacturer or distributor of the system.

v. Electrical Drawing. A line drawing of the electrical components of the system is sufficient detail to allow for a determination that the manner of installation conforms to the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code.

vi. Electric Use. Sufficient information demonstrating that the system will be used primarily to reduce consumption of electricity at that location.

vii. Utility Notice. Written evidence that the electric utility service provider that serves the proposed Site has been informed of the applicant's intent to install an interconnected customer-owned electricity generator, unless the applicant does not plan, and so states so in the application, to connect the system to the electricity grid.

viii. Visual Analysis. A visual analysis of the Small WTG as installed, which may include a computerized photographic simulation, demonstrating the visual impacts from nearby strategic vantage points. The visual analysis shall also indicate the color treatment of the system's components and any Visual screening incorporated into the project that is intended to lessen the system's visual prominence.

## **§23. Development Standards**

In addition to compliance with Subsections 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 of Article II of this local law, all Small WTGs shall comply with the following standards. Where a disagreement with the provisions of Article IV exists, the provisions of Article II supercede those of this Article. Additionally, such systems shall also comply with all the requirements established by other sections of this Article that are not in conflict with the requirements contained in this section.

a. Lot Size. A system shall be located on a lot a minimum of one acre in size, however, this requirement can be met by multiple owners submitting a joint application.

b. Number. Only one small wind energy system tower per legal lot shall be allowed, unless there are multiple applicants, in which their joint lots shall be treated as one lot for purposes of this Article.

c. Use. Small Wind energy systems shall be used primarily to reduce the on-site consumption of electricity.

d. Height. Tower heights may be allowed as follows:

- i. 65 feet or less on parcels between one and five acres.
- ii. 80 feet or less on parcels of five or more acres.
- iii. The allowed height shall be reduced if necessary to comply with all applicable Federal Aviation Requirements, including Subpart B (commencing with Section 77.11) of Part 77 of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations regarding installations close to airports.

e. Output. The maximum turbine power output is limited to 100 kW.

f. Color. The system's tower and blades shall be painted a non-reflective, unobtrusive color that blends the system and its components into the surrounding landscape to the greatest extent possible and incorporate non-reflective surfaces to minimize any visual disruption.

g. Visual Impact. The system shall be designed and located in such a manner to minimize adverse visual impacts from public viewing areas.

h. Lighting. Exterior lighting on any structure associated with the system shall not be allowed except that which is specifically required by the Federal Aviation Administration.

i. Electric Lines. All on-site electrical wires associated with the system shall be installed underground except for "tie-ins" to a public utility company and public utility company transmission poles, towers and lines. This standard may be modified by the decision-maker if the project terrain is determined to be unsuitable due to reasons of excessive grading, biological impacts, or similar factors.

j. Electromagnetic Interference. The system shall be operated such that no disruptive electromagnetic interference is caused. If it has been demonstrated that a system is causing harmful interference, the system operator shall promptly mitigate the harmful interference or cease operation of the system.

k. Signs. At least one sign shall be posted on the tower at a reasonable height warning of electrical shock or high voltage and harm from revolving machinery. No brand names, logo or advertising shall be placed or painted on the tower, rotor, generator or tail vane where it would be visible from the ground, except that a system or tower's manufacturer's logo may be displayed on a system generator housing in an unobtrusive manner.

l. Access Control. Towers shall be constructed to provide one of the following means of access control, or other appropriate method of access:

- i. Tower-climbing apparatus located no closer than 12 feet from the ground.
- ii. A locked anti-climb device installed on the tower.
- iii. A locked, protective fence at least six feet in height that encloses the tower.

m. Anchors. Anchor points for any guy wires for a system tower shall be located within the property that the system is located on and not on or across any above ground electric transmission or distribution lines. The point of attachment for the guy wires shall be enclosed by a fence six feet high or sheathed in bright orange or yellow covering from three to eight feet above the ground.

n. Access Roads. Construction of on-site access roadways shall be minimized. Temporary access roads utilized for initial installation shall be re-graded and revegetated to the pre-existing natural condition after completion of installation.

o. Code Compliance. All small wind energy system tower structures shall be designed and constructed to be in compliance with pertinent provisions of the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code.

p. Controls. All small wind energy systems shall be equipped with manual and automatic over-speed controls. The conformance of rotor and over-speed control design and fabrication with good engineering practices shall be certified by the manufacturer.

## **§24. Standards**

A Small Wind Energy System shall comply with the following standards:

a. Setbacks. A Small WTG shall not be located closer to a property line than 1.3 times the Total Height of the Small WTG.

b. Noise. Except during short-term events including utility outages and severe wind storms, a Small WTG shall be designed, installed, and operated so that noise generated by the system shall not exceed 6 decibels (dBA) above background sound, as measured at the closest neighboring property boundary.

## **§25. Abatement**

a. Operation. All small WTG shall be maintained in good condition and in accordance with all requirements of this section.

b. Removal. Small WTG which is not used for a continuous period of one (1) year shall be deemed abandoned and shall be dismantled and removed from the property at the expense of the property owner. Failure to abide by and faithfully comply with this section or with any and all

conditions that may be attached to the granting of any building permit shall constitute grounds for the revocation of the permit.

## **ARTICLE V. MISCELLANEOUS**

### **§26. Fees**

Permit fees, host community payments, and escrow payments are in addition to application fees.

a. Wind Energy Permits. Non-refundable application fees shall be as follows:

i. WTG Wind Energy Permit: \$250 per megawatt of rated maximum capacity

ii. Wind Measurement. Towers Wind Energy Permit: \$200 per tower

iii. Small WTG Wind Energy Permit: \$150 per WTG

iv. Wind Measurement Tower Wind Energy Permit renewals: \$50 per tower.

b. Building Permits. The Town believes the review of building and electrical permits for Wind Energy Facilities requires specific expertise for those facilities. Accordingly, the permit fees for such facilities shall be \$250 per permit request for administrative costs, plus the amount charged to the Town by the outside consultant hired by the Town to review the plans and inspect the work. The Town and the applicant will agree to a fee arrangement and escrow agreement to pay for the costs of the review of the plans.

c. Host Community Agreements. Nothing in this Local Law shall be read as limiting the ability of the Town to enter into host community agreements with any applicant to compensate the town for expenses or impacts on the community.

d. Escrow Agreement. The agreement required under Subsection 9(b) of this Article must be executed and funded before any application is deemed complete.

### **§27. Enforcement; Penalties and Remedies for Violations**

a. Staff. The Town Board shall appoint such Town staff or outside consultants as it sees fit to enforce this Local Law.

b. Penalties. Any person owning, controlling or managing any building, structure or land who shall undertake a Wind Energy Facility in violation of this Local Law or in noncompliance with the terms and conditions of any permit issued pursuant to this Local Law, or any order of the enforcement officer, and any person who shall assist in so doing, shall be guilty of a violation and subject to a fine of not more than \$350 per day per violation. Every such person shall be deemed guilty of a separate offense for each day such violation shall continue. The Town may

institute a civil proceeding to collect civil penalties in the amount of \$350 for each violation and each day said violation continues shall be deemed a separate violation.

c. Other Remedies. In case of any violation or threatened violation of any of the provisions of this Local Law, including the terms and conditions imposed by any permit issued pursuant to this Local Law, in addition to other remedies and penalties herein provided, the Town may institute any appropriate action or proceeding to prevent such unlawful erection, structural alteration, reconstruction, moving and/or use, and to restrain, correct or abate such violation, to prevent the illegal act.

## **§28. Tax Exemption**

The Town hereby exercises its right to opt out of the Tax Exemption provisions of Real Property Tax Law Section 487, pursuant to the authority granted by paragraph 8 of that law.

## **§29. Severability**

Should sections 10, 11, 12, 13, 15 or 28 of this Local Law be declared by the courts to be unconstitutional or invalid, the provisions of Local Law Number 1 of 2007 shall be deemed to be reinstated and applicable in place of the section or sections declared to be unconstitutional or invalid. Should any other section of this Local Law be declared by the courts to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of this Local Law as a whole or any part thereof other than that specific part so decided to be unconstitutional or invalid.

## **§ 30. Effective Date**

This Local Law shall be effective upon its filing with the Secretary of State in accordance with the Municipal Home Rule Law.



## APPENDIX I

### Studies and research reports regarding wind turbine noise and health effects

Christopher J. Bajdek, *Communicating the Noise Effects of Wind Farms to Stakeholders*, Proceedings of NOISE-CON 2007 (Reno, Nevada), available at <[http://www.hmmh.com/cmsdocuments/Bajdek\\_NC07.pdf](http://www.hmmh.com/cmsdocuments/Bajdek_NC07.pdf)>.

T. Burton, D. Sharpe, N. Jenkins and E. Bossanyi, *WIND ENERGY HANDBOOK* (2001), West Sussex, England, John Wiley and Sons.

Jim Cummings, *AEI Special Report: Wind Turbine Noise Impacts*, Acoustic Ecology Institute (Santa Fe, NM) 2009, p. 7, <[AcousticEcology.org/srwind.html](http://AcousticEcology.org/srwind.html)>.

E.ON Renewables (UK), *Turbines on your land* (2007), <<http://www.eon-uk.com/Turbinesonyourland.pdf>>.

Barbara J. Frey and Peter J. Hadden, *Noise Radiation from Wind turbines Installed Near Homes: Effects on Health*, February 2007, <<http://www.windturbinenoisehealthhumanrights.com/>>.

Dr. Chantal Gueniot, *Wind turbines: The Academy cautious*, PANORAMA DU MÉDECIN, March 20, 2006, reporting on National Academy of Medicine in France, LE RETENTISSEMENT DU FONCTIONNEMENT DES ÉOLIENNES SUR LA SANTÉ DE L'HOMME ("Repercussions of wind turbine operations on human health"), <<http://www.allianceformeredithe.org/pdf/FrenchNOISEReport.pdf>>.

Graham Harding, Pamela Harding and Arnold Wilkins, *Wind turbines, flicker, and photosensitive epilepsy: Characterizing the flashing that may precipitate seizures and optimizing guidelines to prevent them*, 49(6) EPILEPSIA (2008) 1095-1098.

Harry, Amanda, M.D., *Wind Turbines, Noise and Health*, February 2007.

George Kamperman and Richard R. James, *Simple guidelines for siting wind turbines to prevent health risks*, The Institute of Noise Control Engineering of the USA, 117 Proceedings of NOISE-CON 2008 1122-1128, Dearborn, Michigan, <<http://www.inceusa.org/>>.

Minnesota Department of Health, *PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACTS OF WIND TURBINES* (2009), <<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/ch/hazardous/topics/windturbines.pdf>>.

National Research Council, *ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF WIND-ENERGY PROJECTS* (National Academies Press, 2007), <<http://www.nap.edu/catalog/11935.html>>.

National Wind Coordinating Committee (NWCC) Siting Subcommittee, *PERMITTING OF WIND ENERGY FACILITIES: A HANDBOOK* (Washington, DC, NWCC, 1998).

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, ASSESSING AND MITIGATING NOISE IMPACTS, 2001, <[http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits\\_ej\\_operations\\_pdf/noise2000.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits_ej_operations_pdf/noise2000.pdf)>.

Eja Pedersen and Kerstin Persson Waye, *Wind turbines - low level noise sources interfering with restoration?*, 3(1) ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH LETTERS (2008), <<http://www.iop.org/EJ/abstract/1748-9326/3/1/015002/>>.

Nina Pierpont, M.D., Ph.D., *Health Effects of Wind Turbine Noise*, March 2, 2006, <<http://www.windturbinesyndrome.com/>>.

Nina Pierpont, M.D., Ph.D., *Wind Turbine Syndrome: Noise, Shadow Flicker, and Health*, August 1, 2006, <<http://www.windturbinesyndrome.com/?p=100>>.

Anthony L. Rogers, et al. (2006). *Wind Turbine Acoustic Noise: A White Paper*, Renewable Energy Research Laboratory, Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering University of Massachusetts at Amherst (June 2002, amended January 2006), <[http://www.ceere.org/rerl/publications/whitepapers/Wind\\_Turbine\\_Acoustic\\_Noise\\_Rev2006.pdf](http://www.ceere.org/rerl/publications/whitepapers/Wind_Turbine_Acoustic_Noise_Rev2006.pdf)>.

Frits van den Berg, *The sounds of high winds: the effect of atmospheric stability on wind turbine sound and microphone noise*, Diss., Univ. Groningen 2006, <[http://dissertations.ub.rug.nl/FILES/faculties/science/2006/g.p.van.den.berg/00\\_titlecon.pdf](http://dissertations.ub.rug.nl/FILES/faculties/science/2006/g.p.van.den.berg/00_titlecon.pdf)>.

UK Noise Association, LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION: AN INVESTIGATION INTO WIND FARMS AND NOISE (July 2006), <<http://www.countryguardian.net/Location.pdf>>, and <<http://www.ukna.org.uk>>.

World Health Organization, GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY NOISE (1999), <<http://www.who.int/docstore/peh/noise/guidelines2.html>>.

## APPENDIX II

George Kamperman and Richard R. James, *Simple guidelines for siting wind turbines to prevent health risks*, The Institute of Noise Control Engineering of the USA, 117 Proceedings of NOISE-CON 2008 1122-1128, Dearborn, Michigan, <<http://www.inceusa.org/>>; “Measurement Procedures” at pp. 27-32 (attached hereto and incorporated by reference).

# THE “HOW TO” GUIDE TO CRITERIA FOR SITING WIND TURBINES TO PREVENT HEALTH RISKS FROM SOUND

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**"A subset of society should not be forced to bear the cost of a benefit for the larger society." <sup>1</sup>**

## Introduction

One of the founding principles in the United States is encapsulated in the quote above. Today in a significant number of rural communities residents believe this principle is under challenge by the current push for renewable energy sources, especially those related to industrial-scale wind turbines (WTi). The U.S. is a latecomer to the wide spread use of wind turbines as an integral part of the electrical utility system. The construction of large WTi projects in the U.S. is a relatively recent phenomenon, with most of the projects occurring after 2002. Other countries, especially in Europe and the U.K., have been using wind energy systems since the early 1990's and in some cases even earlier. Wind energy in those countries where WTi locations are optimum for production of electricity, produce a substantial amount of electricity for internal use or export. These early projects were often installations of wind turbines with less than 1 MWatt generation capacity and with hub heights under 200 feet. Now, many of these early wind energy projects are near the end of their life cycle and are being replaced with the larger industrial grade WTi unit with capacities of 1.5MWatts to 3 or more MWatts. The concepts and recommendations of this article may be applicable outside the U.S. as older wind farms are upgraded to the larger 1.5 MWatt and larger WTi.

If one listens to the people who see industrial wind turbines as the answer to the energy concerns in the U.S. one would think that the wind turbines are perfectly compatible with rural communities. Our State and Federal Governments and their agencies make the same claims about compatibility. Some States have established guidelines and direct local county and township governments to adopt these draft ordinances for their own use.

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<sup>1</sup> George S. Hawkins, Esq., *"One Page Takings Summary: U.S Constitution and Local Land Use,"*  
Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association  
*"...[N]or shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation."*  
Fifth Amendment, US Constitution.

On the other hand, if one listens to the various community action groups that have been organized in almost every community where WTi projects have been announced the situation is just the opposite. The members of those groups believe there is ample reason to challenge criteria set in the State Draft Ordinances and actively petition their local governments to adopt stricter guidelines. To them, WTi will cause excessive noise at or in their homes. Other concerns include vibration and potential health risks to the community. Those who live the closest to the WTi host sites feel they are asked to bear the largest share of the burdens and risks of living near the industrial wind turbine project.

Who is correct? How does one know who to believe? Indeed, does anyone know the whole truth?

When faced with a new situation it is often worthwhile to see if one can learn from the experiences of the 'early adopters.' In the U.K., for example, there are currently about 133 operating WTi developments. Many of these have been operational for over 10 years. The Acoustic Ecology Institute (AEI) cites one study conducted for the British government in its AEI Special Report titled: "Wind Energy Noise Impacts<sup>2</sup>" that found only about 20% of wind farms tend to generate noise complaints. Another study done for the British government by the consulting firm Hayes, McKensie<sup>3</sup> reported that only five (5) of 126 wind farms in the U.K. reported problems with the phenomenon known as Aerodynamic Modulation (AM). Thus, experience in the U. K. shows that not all WTi projects lead to community complaints. The question posed by AEI to these findings in its report is: **"What are the factors in *those* wind farms that may be problematic, and how can we avoid replicating these situations elsewhere?"**

One might expect that the wind industry itself, given the European and U.K. experiences, would have conducted extensive research using independent research institutions to answer this question. The wind industry was aware of, or should have been aware of, the complaints of noise and/or vibration from people living near the "20%" of the projects that are recognized as having problems. Particularly considering there are more stringent noise limits in those countries than are being promoted in the U.S. As discussed later, the wind industry is aware of and follows criteria limiting the WTi to L<sub>90</sub>+5 dBA limits in some countries or the fixed limits of not-to-exceed 30-40 dBA at night in rural and residential areas of Germany.

A serious question is asked and it deserves a serious answer. Answers based on independent and peer reviewed studies are sought by the committee charged with fact finding. But, the industry response is spurious and misleading. The answer does not address the question. It states that the turbines will be located so as to produce sound levels of 45 dBA. The tone and context imply that 45 dBA is fully compatible with the quiet rural community where they plan to host the WTi. No acknowledgement is made of the dramatic change that will occur for near-by families when a WTi is producing 45 dBA outside their home with the potential for it being 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year.

No mention is made of how the sounds from the WTi will raise evening and night time background sound levels from existing background levels from the traditional range of 20 dBA to 30 dBA up to 45 dBA once the wind project is operating on a regular basis. There is no disclosure of the considerable low frequency content to the WTi sound; in fact, there are often

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<sup>2</sup> AEI is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization based in Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA. The article is available at <http://www.acousticecology.org/srwind.html>

<sup>3</sup> Study review available at: <http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file35592.pdf>



claims to the contrary. Yet, modern home construction techniques used for most wood frame homes result in walls and roofs that cannot block WTi low frequencies from penetrating into the interior.

But, from what information the industry has been willing to make public, it appears that none of this prior experience has been applied to the projects in the U.S. Instead, what has been observed of their actions in the U.S. shows WTi project developers and their supporters making claims that wind turbines will not be a noise 'problem' to near-by residents. That the turbines will be "as 'quiet' as a person talking outside the window" of the near-by homes or "no noisier than a refrigerator..." are claims often heard. This ignores the question of just how many people want someone talking outside their bedroom window all night long or wish to sleep with a refrigerator alongside their bed?

A typical WTi developer's response to a question raised by a community committee about noise and health is the following:

**Q: 19. What sound standards will EcoEnergy ensure that the turbines will be within, based on the setbacks EcoEnergy plans to implement, and what scientific and peer reviewed data do you have to ensure and support there will be no health and safety issues to persons within your setbacks?**

**Answer:** As mentioned, turbines are sited to have maximum sound level of 45dBA. These sound levels are well below levels causing physical harm. Medical books on sound indicate sound levels above 80-90dBA cause physical (health) effects. The possible effects to a person's health due to "annoyance" are impossible to study in a scientific way, as these are often mostly psychosomatic, and are not caused by wind turbines as much as the individuals obsession with a new item in their environment.

**From EcoEnergy's "Response to the Town of Union Health & Safety Research Questionnaire"**

By Curt Bjurlin, M.S., Wes Slaymaker, P.E., Rick Gungel, P.E., EcoEnergy, L.L.C., submitted to Town of Union, Wisconsin and Mr. Kendall Schneider, on behalf of the Town of Union

There is no mention of the nighttime sound level recommendations set by the World Health Organization (WHO) in their documents on Community Noise or their "Report on the third meeting on night noise guidelines." In those documents WHO recommends that **sound levels during nighttime and late evening hours should be less than 30 dBA during sleeping periods to protect children's health.** They noted that a child's autonomous nervous system is 10 to 15 dB more sensitive to noise than adults. Even for adults, health effects are first noted in some studies when the sound levels exceed 32 dBA  $L_{max}$ . These levels are 10-20 dBA lower than the sound levels needed to cause awakening.

For sounds that contain a strong low frequency component, which is typical of wind turbines, WHO says that the limits may need to be even lower than 30 dBA to avoid health risks. Further, they recommend that the criteria use dBC frequency weighting instead of dBA for sources with low frequency content. When sound levels are 45 dBA outside a home, the interior sound levels must be less than 30 dBA in the sleeping areas to avoid sleep disturbance. This is because the low frequency content of the WTi can penetrate the home's walls and roof with very little low frequency noise reduction. An example demonstrating how WTi sound is affected by walls and windows is provided later in this document.

The wind turbine developers also fail to disclose that the International Standards Organization (ISO) in ISO 1996-1971 recommends 25 dBA as the maximum night-time limit for rural communities. As can be seen in the table below sound levels of 40 dBA and above are only

appropriate in suburban communities during the day and urban communities during day and night. There are no communities where 45 dBA is considered acceptable at night.

ISO 1996-1971 Recommendations for Community Noise Limits			
District Type	Daytime Limit	Evening Limit 7-11pm	Night Limit 11pm-7am
Rural	35dB	<b>30dB</b>	<b>25dB</b>
Suburban	40dB	35dB	<b>30dB</b>
Urban residential	45dB	40dB	35dB
Urban mixed	50dB	45db	40dB

Even more egregious, the wind industry makes claims like *"These sound levels are well below levels causing physical harm. Medical books on sound indicate sound levels above 80-90dBA cause physical (health) effects."* First of all, concern about sound levels in the 80-90 dBA range is for hearing health, (your ears) and not the health related issues of sleep disturbance and other causative factors associated with prolonged exposure to low levels of noise. This type of response is a non-answer. It is a conscious attempt to mislead while giving the appearance of providing a legitimate response.

Further, the statement: *"The possible effects to a person's health due to "annoyance" are impossible to study in a scientific way, as these are often mostly psychosomatic, and are not caused by wind turbines as much as the individuals obsession with a new item in their environment"* is both inaccurate and misleading. It ignores the work of researchers like Drs. Eja Pedersen, Amanda Harry, Robin Phipps, and the numerous medical research studies summarized in the work of Frey and Hadden to name just a few. These studies, in addition to the work here in the U.S. by Dr. Pierpont, belie the claims of the wind industry. This 'oversight' of published studies is so blatant as to make some interpret their claim of 'no medical research' as a conscious decision to not look for it. If they looked they would find there are numerous studies by qualified medical researchers that contradict their claim.

Compounding these unfounded and misleading claims to the questions raised by the community's committee members, wind industry advocates who have little or no medical qualifications make statements outside of their area of competence. They label complaints of health effects as 'psychosomatic' in a pejorative manner that implies the complaints can be discounted because they are not really "medical" conditions. These responses cannot be considered as based in fact. They ignore the work of many researchers, including health organizations like WHO on the effect of sounds during nighttime hours that result in sleep disturbance and other disorders that cause physical, not just psychological pathologies.<sup>4 5</sup> Many people find it difficult to articulate what has changed. They know that something is different and they may express it as feeling uncomfortable, uneasy, and sleepless or some other symptom. Yet, they often cannot explain why this is happening.

<sup>4</sup> WHO European Centre for Environment and Health, Bonn Office, "Report on the third meeting on night noise guidelines," April 2005

<sup>5</sup> According to Online Etymology Dictionary, Psychosomatic means: "pertaining to the relation between mind and body," ... Applied from 1938 to physical disorders with psychological causes."

The attempt to make light of the well established physical effects of nighttime sounds from WTi located too close to homes by labeling them as 'psychosomatic' is the only response the wind industry offers to a question about real health risks. To many, the constant denial by the wind industry and its promoters about health risks is a 'red flag' that something is amiss.

Industry representatives on State level governmental committees have worked to establish sound limits and setbacks that are even more lenient. In Michigan, for example, the Governor's State Task Force recommended in its "Siting Guidelines for Wind Energy Systems" that the limits be set at 55 dBA or  $L_{90} + 5$  dBA, whichever is higher. In Wisconsin, the State Task Force has recommended 50 dBA.

Who are on these Task Forces? When Wisconsin's Town of Union wind turbine committee made an open records request to find out what scientific basis there was for the sound levels and setbacks in the state's draft model ordinance it was revealed that no scientific or medical data was used at all. Review of the meeting minutes provided under that request showed that the limits had been set by Task Force members representing the wind industry.<sup>6</sup>

Why have State level committees and/or task forces drafted ordinances with upper limits of 50 dBA or higher instead of the much lower limits applied to similar projects in other countries? Where do they find the support for claims that locating 400 foot tall WTi as close as 1000 feet (or less) to non-participating properties will not create noise disturbances or other risks? How can they make the claims in the face of a legacy of complaints from people living near existing wind turbine developments? Why so close?<sup>7</sup> Whose interest is being served?<sup>7</sup>

It is disappointing that the studies that are needed have not been done by the wind industry or any of the other people eager to satisfy our federal and state government's unbridled enthusiasm for wind energy. This type of work has been delegated by the wind industry and its supporters to private individuals and researchers who are working to understand what differences in siting, weather, and operational modes result in the 'failures.' When people in a community complain about an existing wind project doesn't this create a serious public relations problem for the wind industry? Why is there a sense of denial in its response to these situations?

The burden of the small percentage of failures is placed on the people who are being forced to live with conditions they find annoying at best and intolerable at its worst. Many of these people feel that they have had no part to the decisions that created these conditions. Often, they were members of a citizen's group that tried to forewarn their local government about the

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<sup>6</sup> Lawton, Catharine M., Letter to Wisconsin's "Guidelines and Model Ordinances Ad Hoc Subcommittee of the Wisconsin Wind Power Siting Collaborative" in Response to Paul Helgeson's 9/20/00 "Wisconsin Wind Ordinance Egroups E-Mail Message," Sept. 20, 2000, a Public Record obtained through Open Meetings Act request by the Town of Union, Wisconsin, Large Wind Turbine Citizens Committee.

<sup>7</sup> It is worth noting that the 2007-06-29 version of the Vestas Mechanical Operating and Maintenance Manual for the model V90 - 3.0 MW VCRS 60 Hz turbine includes this warning for technicians and operators:

## **2. Stay and Traffic by the Turbine**

Do not stay within a radius of 400m (1300ft) from the turbine unless it is necessary. If you have to inspect an operating turbine from the ground, do not stay under the rotor plane but observe the rotor from the front.

Make sure that children do not stay by or play nearby the turbine. ....

possibility that the wind project would not be compatible with their community. On top of this individualized burden they are asked, like the rest of us, to bear the increased costs for electricity, subsidies, and taxes that result from the government incentives to entice investments in WTi developments.

This is why the two studies in this document are so important. They are not the product of a well funded research project by a major research group, but are instead the personal work of private individuals with expertise in their respective fields, but limited in both funds and access to the internal data of the wind industry.

Both studies are based on solid foundations and their authors are experienced in their respective fields. But, these studies are of necessity limited by the barriers that prevent access to internal data and the time and funds to conduct the research while trying to conduct their normal business activities. Those who may not like the results of the studies will work hard to find flaws to use in an attempt to discredit them, but those are the same people and organizations that have not been pro-active by funding the appropriate independent research or providing access to data that is now claimed as 'trade-secrets' by the industry. Whether the attempts to discredit are to claim that the research is too limited or that the information upon which the conclusions are drawn are limited or some other argument the truth is that the wind industry should have done this work in an open, public manner using research groups that are both qualified and totally independent. That is the real problem.

There is much that can be done even in the face of limited resources. For example, there may be questions about whether wind turbines produce low frequency or infra-sound emissions or not. But, one does not have to know that there are high levels of low frequency or infrasound to develop criteria that will protect against excessive levels just in case they are part of the WTi sound emissions. One does not have to know what the mechanism is for pathology, if one knows that moving away from wind turbines allows the pathologies to stabilize or reverse then it is best to move away. Knowing what we wish to avoid is often enough to justify establishing rules and guidelines that protect a community just in case those problems do exist.

These are early studies that should lead to more thorough studies, with proper funding. If this work had been done by the wind industry prior to generating the government enthusiasm for their product with claims of compatibility with land-use in rural communities then people like Dr. Pierpont and the authors of this article would not be doing it on their behalf. We sincerely hope that our work will lead to a higher level of interest in seeking the answer to the question of why some WTi projects do not result in acceptance by people living near them in the host communities.

No new industrial process should be imposed on an unsuspecting public without having been thoroughly, publicly, and independently studied beforehand. Only after such studies show that industrial WTi projects do not introduce risks to the health or safety of the target communities should they be permitted to proceed. If the studies show there are risks, then the next step is to determine what is needed to prevent them.

Until such work is done and accepted by independent reviewers, no WTi projects should be permitted using taxpayer funds without stringent rules for noise and other risk factors. In the absence of such work, it is both prudent and necessary to err on the side of caution regarding public health and safety including stringent standards limiting noise and other risk factors until more and better information becomes available.



## Options for Siting Criteria

We started our research into guidelines for proper siting by reviewing the various guidelines used in other countries to limit WTi sound emissions. A recent compendium of many of these standards was presented in the report: "Wind Turbine Facilities Noise Issues"<sup>8</sup>. We found some common ground in many of them. Some like Germany set explicit not-to-exceed sound level limits like 40 dBA nighttime in residential areas and 35 dBA nighttime in rural and other noise sensitive areas. Other countries used the existing background sound levels for each community as the basis for establishing the sound level limits for the WES project. This second method has the advantage of adjusting the allowable limits for various background soundscapes. It makes use of a standard method for assessing background sound levels by measuring over a specified period of observation to determine the sound level exceeded 90% of the time ( $L_{90}$ ) during the night. The night is important because it is the most likely time for sleep disturbance. Then, using the background sound level as the base the WES project is allowed to increase it by 5 dBA. It is this second method ( $L_{90} + 5$  dBA) that we adopted for the criteria in this document. It has the advantage of adjusting the criteria for each community without the need for tables of allowable limits for different community types. We also focused only on the nighttime criteria. This is because the WES will operate 24 hours a day and the nighttime limits will be the controlling limits whether or not there are other limits for daytime.

Since many rural communities are very quiet it is possible that some will have  $L_{90}$  values of 25 dBA or lower. This may seem extreme when compared to limits usually imposed on other sources of community noise.

But, wind turbine sounds are not comparable to the more common noise sources of vehicles, aircraft, rail and industry. Several studies<sup>9</sup> have shown that annoyance to wind turbine sounds begins at levels as low as 30 dBA. This is especially true in quiet rural communities that have not had previous experience with industrial noise sources. This increased sensitivity may be a result of the periodic 'whoosh'

The World Health Organization recognizes the special place of low frequency noise as an environmental problem. Its publication "Community Noise" (Berglund et al., 2000) makes a number of references to low frequency noise, some of which are as follows:

- "It should be noted that low frequency noise... can disturb rest and sleep even at low sound levels.
- For noise with a large proportion of low frequency sounds a still lower guideline (than 30dBA) is recommended.
- When prominent low frequency components are present, noise measures based on A-weighting are inappropriate.
- Since A-weighting underestimates the sound pressure level of noise with low frequency components, a better assessment of health effects would be to use C-weighting.
- It should be noted that a large proportion of low frequency components in a noise may increase considerably the adverse effects on health."

WHO also states: "The evidence on low frequency noise is sufficiently strong to warrant immediate concern."

<sup>8</sup> Ramakrishnan, Ph. D., P. Eng., Ramani, "Wind Turbine Facilities Noise Issues" Dec. 2007 Prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Environment.

<sup>9</sup> Eja Pedersen, "Human response to wind turbine noise – Perception, annoyance and moderating factors, Occupational and Environmental Medicine," The Sahlgrenska Academy, Gotenborg 2007 and the more recent work "Wind Farm Perception".



from the blades against the quiet rural soundscape or it may be more complex. But, it is a legitimate response to wind turbine sound based on solid peer reviewed research.

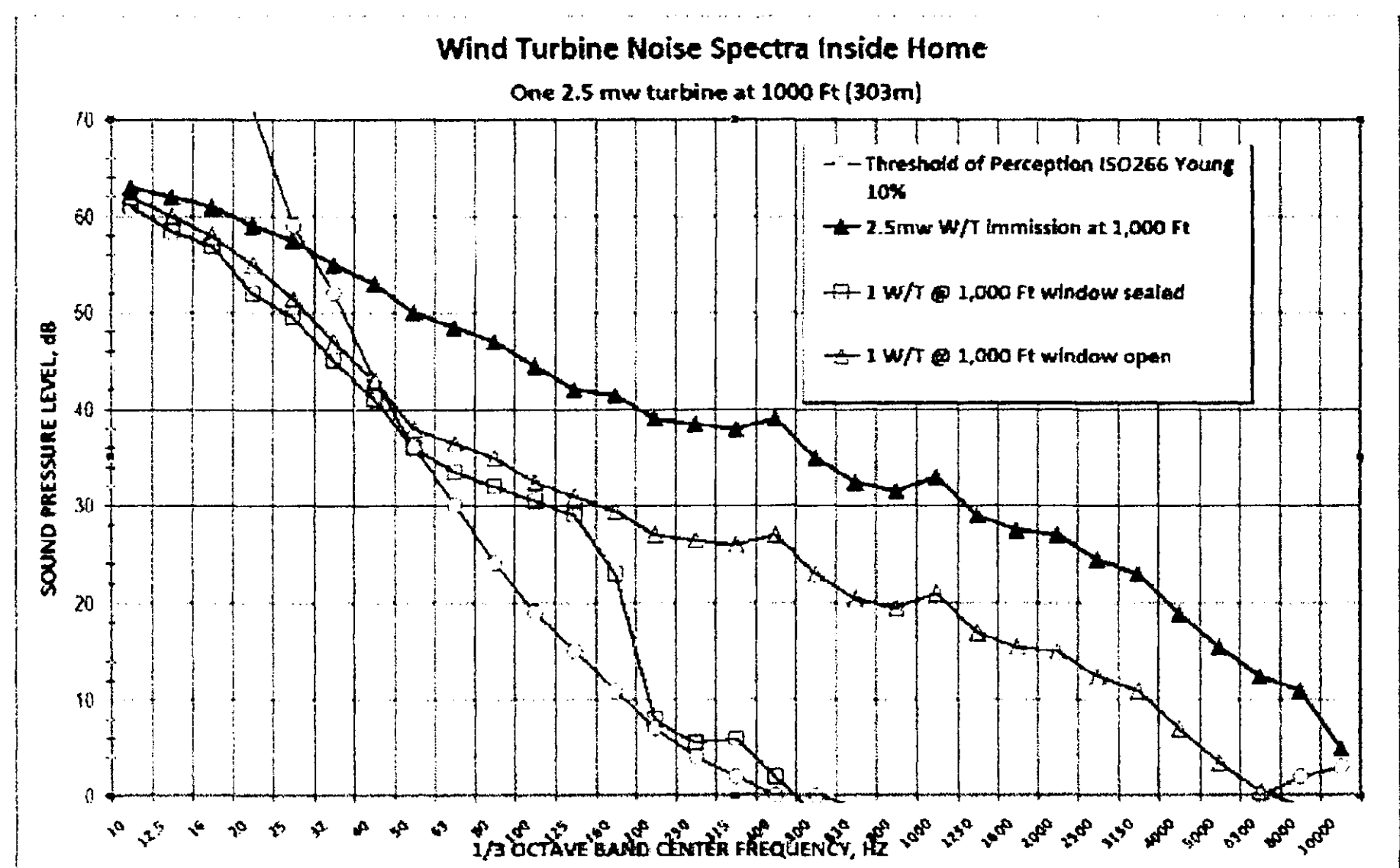
In the adjacent text box are a series of observations and recommendations of the World Health organization (WHO) supporting the need for stricter limits when there is substantial low frequency content in the outdoor sound. Our review of other studies plus our own studies has demonstrated that wind turbine sound includes considerable low frequency content. We elected to include a dBC limit in our guidelines to address the WHO recommendation that when low frequency sound may be present criteria based on measurements using a C-weighting filter on the sound level meter (dBC) are needed in addition to any dBA criteria.

When low frequency sound is present outside homes and other occupied structures; it is often more likely to be an indoor problem than an outdoor one. This is very true for wind turbine sounds.

To demonstrate the effects of outdoor low frequency content from wind turbines we prepared the figures below showing the effect of a single turbine (propagation model based on sound power level test data) at 1000 feet and ten (10) turbines at one (1) mile. The graphs each show the outdoor sound pressure levels predicted for the distance of 1000 feet or one mile as the upper graph line. There is also a curve that shows the threshold of human perception for sounds at each 1/3 octave

band center. When the graphs representing wind turbine sound have data points above this curve the sounds will be perceptible to at least 10% of the population. In addition to the top graph line representing the sounds outside the home there are two other graph lines for

the sounds inside the home<sup>10</sup>. One graph represents the condition of no open windows and the other represents one open window. Note how the two graph lines for the inside conditions are significantly higher in amplitude than the curve representing the threshold of perception. Even with the windows closed the sound pressure levels in the 63 Hz to 200 Hz octave bands still exceed the perception curve, in many cases by more than 10 dB. When comparing the dBC values the difference between inside sounds and outside is much less. The maximum difference in this example is only 7 dBC and that is for the situation with windows closed. With windows open the sound inside the home would be 56 dBC while it is 61 dBC outside; a difference of only

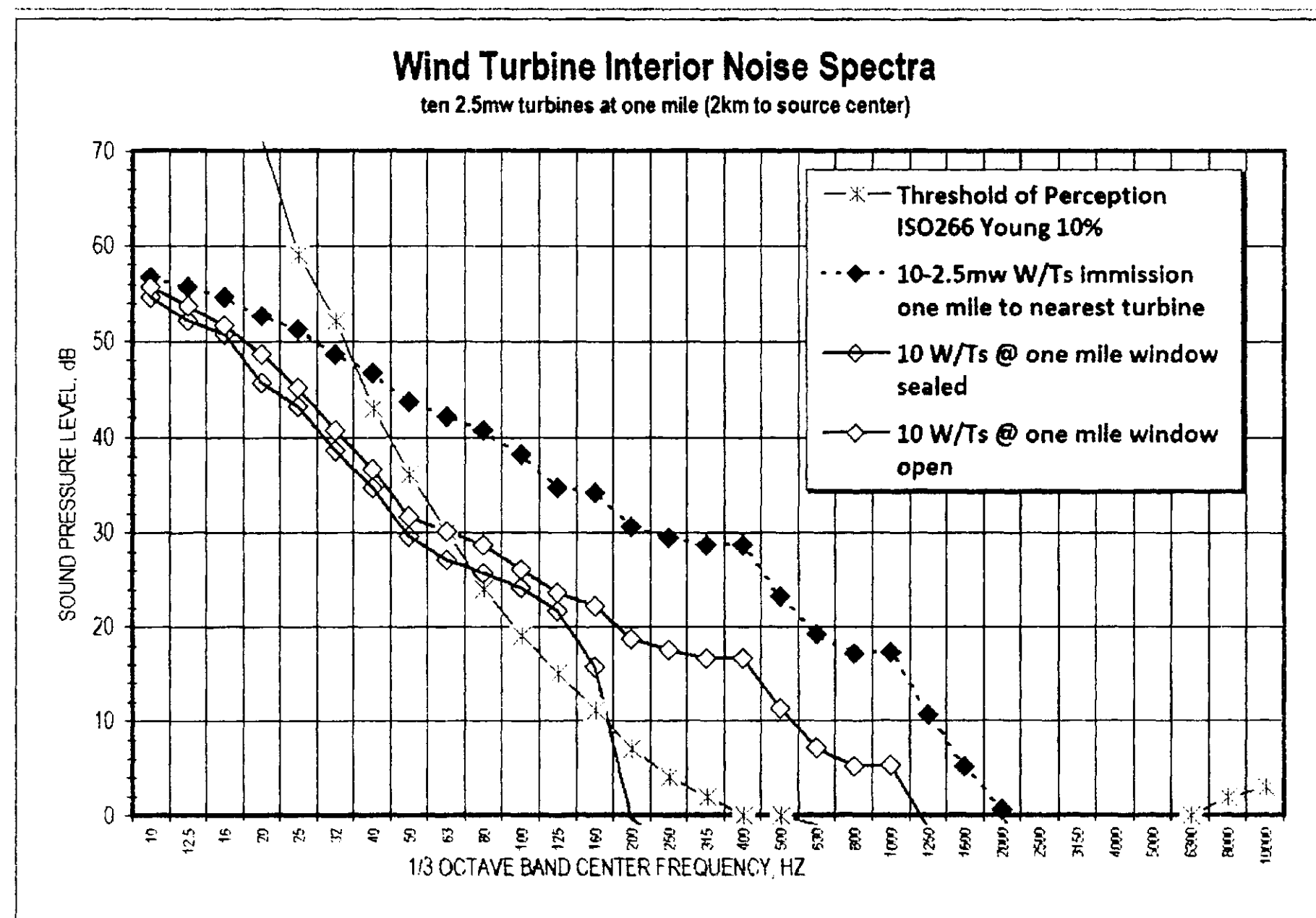


<sup>10</sup> The typical wood stud exterior used in modern home construction is vinyl siding over 1/2 inch OSB or rigid fiberglass board applied to 2 X 4 studs with the stud space filled with thermal and 1/2 inch gypsum board applied on the exposed interior side. This has a mass of about 3-4 lbs/sq ft and low 26 STC.

5 dBC<sup>11,12,13</sup>. If we looked only at dBA it would appear that the home's walls and roof provide a reduction of 15 dBA or more. But, that is misleading. It incorrectly ignores the effects of low frequency sound. Relying on dBA alone will not work for community noise criteria. It is the low frequency phenomena associated with WT emissions that makes the dBC tests an important part of the proposed criteria.

We applied the façade sound isolation data from the Canada Research Council to the 2.5 MW wind turbine example used in our Noise-Con 2008 paper (next section). With just one turbine at 1,000 feet there is a significant amount of low frequency noise above hearing threshold inside a home near an exterior wall without windows or very well sealed windows. Note the perceptible sound between 50 and 200 Hz with a wall resonance frequency at 125 Hz (2 X 4 studs on 16 inch centers) for the windows closed condition. This would be perceived as a constant low rumble which would be present in the homes whenever the turbines are operating.

We next increased the number of 2.5 Mw turbines from one to ten and moved the receiver one mile from the closest turbine. We assumed the acoustic center for the ten turbines to be 2km (1-1/4 miles) from the receiver. These results are in the figure below. For air absorption we assumed 20°C and 50% RH. Ground reflection had



already been accounted for in the earlier 2.5 Mw 1,000' calculations of SPL from the sound power data ( $L_w$ ). We used only simple inverse-square propagation. We were surprised to find that the one mile low frequency results are only 6.3 dB below the 1,000 foot one turbine example.

This may explain why some residents as far as two (2) miles from a wind farm find the wind turbines sounds highly annoying.

<sup>11</sup> The basis for these predictions includes reports on aircraft sound insulation for dwellings and façade sound isolation data from the Canada Research Council.

<sup>12</sup> "On the sound insulation of wood stud exterior walls" by J. S. Bradley and J. S. Birta, institute for Research in Construction, National Research Council, Montreal Road, Ottawa K1A 0R6, Canada, published: J. Acoust. Soc. Am. 110 (6), December 2001

<sup>13</sup> Dan Hoffmeyer, Birger Plovsging: "Low Frequency Noise from Large Wind Turbines, Measurements of Sound Insulation of Facades." Journal no. AV 1097/08, Client: Danish Energy Authority, Amaliegade 44, 1256 Copenhagen K

The next section of this article presents the Noise-Con 2008 paper with some recent revisions. It is therefore more current than the version published in the proceedings.

Dearborn, Michigan

## **NOISE-CON 2008**

**2008 July 28-31**

### **Simple guidelines for siting wind turbines to prevent health risks<sup>14</sup>**

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Revision: 1.0

Industrial scale wind turbines are a familiar part of the landscape in Europe, U.K. and other parts of the world. In the U.S., however, similar industrial scale wind energy developments are just beginning operation. The presence of industrial wind projects will increase dramatically over the next few years given the push by the Federal and state governments to promote renewable energy sources through tax incentives and other forms of economic and political support. States and local governments in the U.S. are promoting what appear to be lenient rules for how industrial wind farms can be located in communities, which are predominantly rural and often very quiet. Studies already completed and currently in progress describe significant health effects associated with living in the vicinity of industrial grade wind turbines. This paper reviews sound studies conducted by consultants for governments, the wind turbine owner, or the local residents for a number of sites with known health or annoyance problems. The purpose is to determine if a set of simple guidelines using dBA and dBC sound levels can serve as the 'safe' siting guidelines. Findings of the review and recommendations for sound limits will be presented. A discussion of how the proposed limits would have affected the existing sites where people have demonstrated pathologies apparently related to wind turbine sound will also be presented.

### **Background**

A relatively new source of community noise is spreading rapidly across the rural U.S. countryside. Industrial grade wind turbines, a common sight in many European countries, are now being promoted by Federal and state governments as the way to minimize coal powered

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electrical energy and its effects on global warming. But, the initial developments using the newer 1.5 to 3 MWatt wind turbines here in the U.S. has also led to numerous complaints from residents who find themselves no longer in the quiet rural communities they were living in before the wind turbine developments went on-line. Questions have been raised about whether the current siting guidelines being used in the U.S. are sufficiently protective for the people living closest to the developments. Research being conducted into the health issues using data from established wind turbine developments is beginning to appear that supports the possibility there is a basis for the health concerns. Other research into the computer modeling and other methods used for determining the layout of the industrial wind turbine developments and the distances from residents in the adjacent communities are showing that the output of the models should not be considered accurate enough to be used as the sole basis for making the siting decisions.

The authors have reviewed a number of noise studies conducted in response to community complaints for wind energy systems sited in Europe, Canada, and the U.S. to determine if additional criteria are needed for establishing safe limits for industrial wind turbine sound immissions in rural communities. In several cases, the residents who filed the complaints have been included in studies by medical researchers who are investigating the potential health risks associated with living near industrial grade wind turbines 365 days a year. These studies were also reviewed by the authors to help in identifying what factors need to be considered in setting criteria for 'safe' sound limits at receiving properties. Due to concerns about medical privacy, details of these studies are not discussed in this paper. Current standards used in the U.S. and in most other parts of the world rely on not-to-exceed dBA sound levels, such as 50 dBA, or on not-to-exceed limits based on the pre-construction background sound level plus an adder (e.g.  $L_{90A} + 5$  dBA).

Our review covered the community noise studies performed in response to complaints, research on health issues related to wind turbine noise, critiques of noise studies performed by consultants working for the wind developer, and research/technical papers on wind turbine sound immissions and related topics. The papers are listed in Tables 1-4.

**Table 1-List of Studies Related to Complaints**

Resource Systems Engineering, Sound Level Study - Ambient & Operations Sound Level Monitoring, Maine Department of Environmental Protection Order No. L-21635-26-A-N, June 2007
ESS Group, Inc., Draft Environmental Impact Statement For The Dutch Hill Wind Power Project - Town of Cohocton, NY, November 2006
David M. Hessler, Environmental Sound Survey and Noise Impact Assessment - Noble Wethersfield Wind park - Towns of Wethersfield and Eagle NY For: Noble Environmental Power, LLC January 2007
George Hessler, "Report Number 101006-1, Noise Assessment Jordanville Wind Power Project," October 2006
HGC Engineering, "Environmental Noise Assessment Pubnico Point Wind Farm, Nova Scotia, Natural Resources Canada Contract NRCAN-06-0046," August 23, 2006
John I. Walker, Sound Quality Monitoring, East Point, Prince Edward Island" by Jacques Whitford, Consultants for Prince Edward Island Energy Corporation, May 28, 2007



**Table 2- List of Studies related to Health**

Nina Pierpont, "Wind Turbine Syndrome - Abstract" from draft article and personal conversations. <a href="http://www.ninapierpont.com">www.ninapierpont.com</a>
Nina Pierpont, "Letter from Dr. Pierpont to a resident of Ontario, Canada, re: Wind Turbine Syndrome," Autumn 2007
Amanda Harry, "Wind Turbine Noise and Health" (2007)
Barbara J. Frey and Peter J. Hadden, "Noise Radiation from Wind Turbines Installed Near Homes, Effects on Health" (2007)
Eja Pedersen, "Human response to wind turbine noise - Perception, annoyance and moderating factors, Occupational and Environmental Medicine," The Sahlgrenska Academy, Gotenborg 2007
Robin Phipps, "In the Matter of Moturimu Wind Farm Application, Palmerston North, Australia," March 2007
WHO European Centre for Environment and Health, Bonn Office, "Report on the third meeting on night noise guidelines," April 2005

**Table 3-List of Studies that review Siting Impact Statements**

Richard H. Bolton, "Evaluation of Environmental Noise Analysis for 'Jordanville Wind Power Project,'" December 14, 2006 Rev 3.
Clifford P. Schneider, "Accuracy of Model Predictions and the Effects of Atmospheric Stability on Wind Turbine Noise at the Maple Ridge Wind Power Facility," Lowville, NY - 2007

**Table 4-List of Research and Technical papers included in review process**

Anthony L. Rogers, James F. Manwell, Sally Wright, "Wind Turbine Acoustic Noise," Renewable Energy Research Laboratory, Dept. of ME and IE, U of Mass, Amherst, amended June 2006
ISO. 1996. Acoustics - Attenuation of sound during propagation outdoors - Part 2: General method of calculation. International Organization of Standardization. ISO 9613-2. p. 18.
G.P. van den Berg, "The Sounds of High Winds - the effect of atmospheric stability on wind turbine sound and microphone noise," Ph.D. thesis, 2006
Fritz van den Berg, "Wind Profiles over Complex Terrain," Proceedings of Second International Meeting on Wind Turbine Noise, Lyons, France, Sept. 2007
William K. G. Palmer, "Uncloaking the Nature of Wind Turbines-Using the Science of Meteorology," Proceedings of Second International Meeting on Wind Turbine Noise, Lyons, France, Sept. 2007
Soren Vase Legarth, "Auralization and Assessment of Annoyance from Wind Turbines," Proceedings of Second International Meeting on Wind Turbine Noise, Lyons, France, Sept. 2007



Julian T. and Jane Davis, "Living with aerodynamic modulation, low frequency vibration and sleep deprivation - how wind turbines inappropriately placed can act collectively and destroy rural quietitude," Proceedings of Second International Meeting on Wind Turbine Noise, Lyons, France, Sept. 2007
James D. Barnes, "A Variety of Wind Turbine Noise Regulations in the United States - 2007," Proceedings of Second International Meeting on Wind Turbine Noise, Lyons, France, Sept. 2007
M. Schwartz and D. Elliott, Wind Shear Characteristics at Central Plains Tall Towers, NREL 2006
IEC 61400 "Wind turbine generator systems, Part 11: Acoustic noise measurement techniques," .rev:2002

## Discussion

After reviewing the materials in the tables; we have arrived at our current understanding of wind turbine noise and its impact on the host community and its residents. The review showed that some residents living as far as 3 km (two (2) miles) from a wind farm complain of sleep disturbance from the noise. Many residents living one-tenth this distance (300 m. or 1000 feet) from a wind farm are experiencing major sleep disruption and other serious medical problems from nighttime wind turbine noise. The peculiar acoustic characteristics of wind turbine noise immissions cause the sounds heard at the receiving properties to be more annoying and troublesome than the more familiar noise from traffic and industrial factories. Limits used for these other community noise sources do not appear to be appropriate for siting industrial wind turbines. The residents who are annoyed by wind turbine noise complain of the approximately one (1) second repetitive swoosh-boom-swoosh-boom sound of the turbine blades and "low frequency" noise. It is not apparent to these authors whether the complaints that refer to "low frequency" noise are about the audible low frequency part of the swoosh-boom sound, the one hertz amplitude modulation of the swoosh-boom sound, or some combination of both acoustic phenomena.

To assist in understanding the issues at hand, the authors developed the 'conceptual' graph for industrial wind turbine sound shown in Figure 1. This graph shows the data from one of the complaint sites plotted against the sound immission spectra for a modern 2.5 MWatt wind turbine; Young's threshold of perception for the 10% most sensitive population (ISO 0266); and a spectrum obtained for a rural community during a three hour, 20 minute test from 11:45 pm until 3:05 am on a windless June evening in near Ubly, Michigan a quiet rural community located in central Huron County. (Also called: Michigan's Thumb.) It is worth noting that this rural community demonstrates how quiet a rural community can be when located at a distance from industry, highways, and airport related noise emitters.

During our review we posed a number of questions to ourselves related to what we were learning. The questions (*italics*) and our answers are:

*Do National or International or local community Noise Standards for siting wind turbines near dwellings address the low frequency portion of the wind turbine's sound immissions?*<sup>15</sup> No! State and Local governments are in the process of establishing wind farm noise limits and/or wind turbine

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<sup>15</sup> Emissions refer to acoustic energy from the 'viewpoint' of the sound emitter, while immissions refer to acoustic energy from the viewpoint of the receiver.

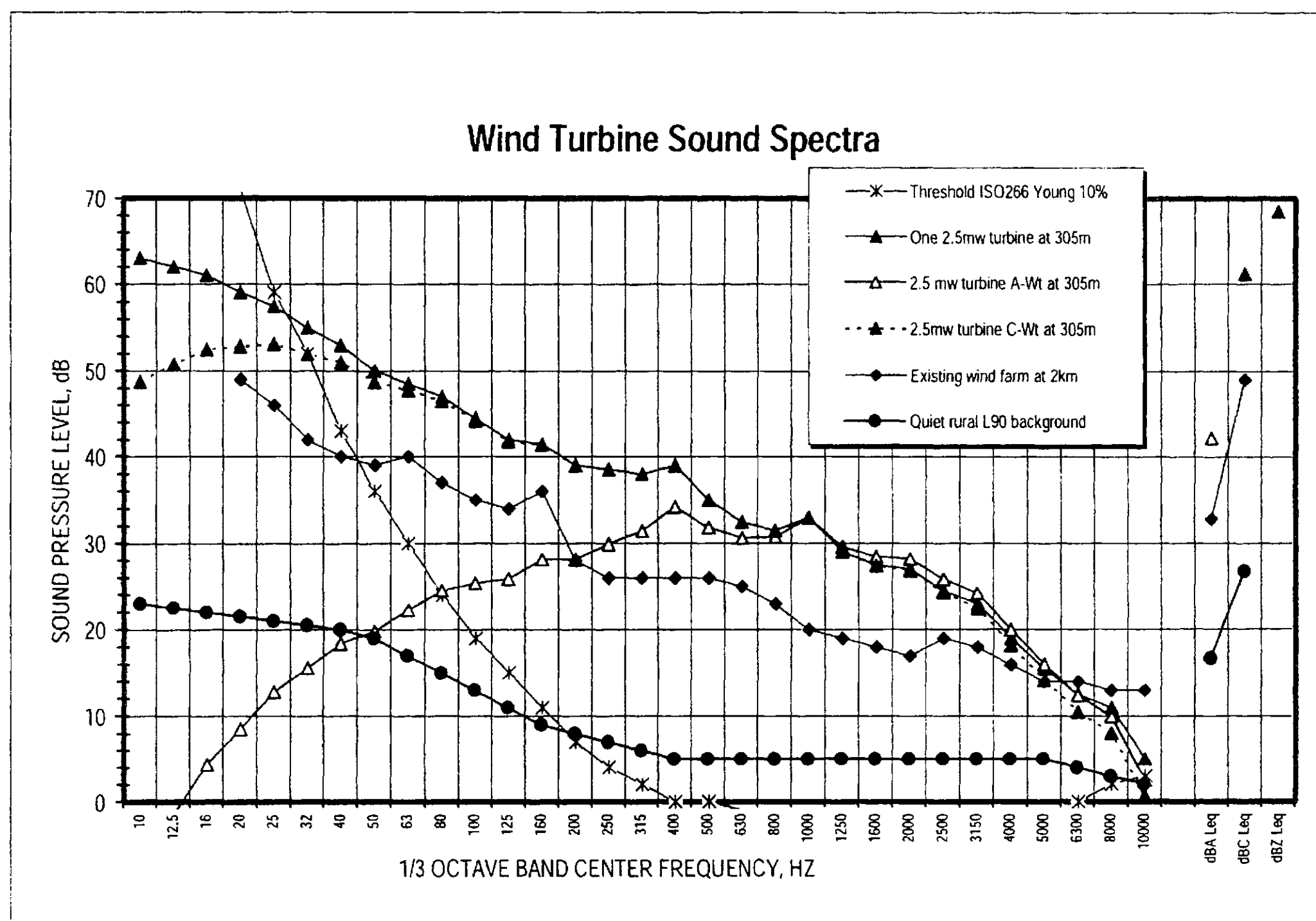
setbacks from nearby residents, but the standards incorrectly presume that limits based on dBA levels are sufficient to protect the residents.

*Do wind farm developers have noise limit criteria and/or wind turbine setback criteria that apply to nearby residents?* Yes! But the Wind Industry recommended residential wind turbine noise levels (typically 50-55 dBA) are too high for the quiet nature of the rural communities and may be unsafe for the nearest residents. An additional concern is that some of the methods for implementing pre-construction computer models may predict sound levels that are too low. These two factors combined can lead to post-construction complaints and health risks.

*Are all residents living near wind farms equally affected by wind turbine noise?* No, children, people with pre-existing medical conditions, especially sleep disorders, and the elderly are generally the most susceptible. Some people are unaffected while some nearby neighbors develop serious health effects caused by exposure to the same wind turbine noise.

*How does wind turbine noise impact nearby residents?* Initially, the most common problem is chronic sleep deprivation during nighttime. According to the medical research documents, this may develop into far more serious physical and psychological problems

*What are the technical options for reducing wind turbine noise immission at residences?* There are only two options: 1) increase the distance between source and receiver, and/or 2) reduce the source sound power immission. Either solution is incompatible with the objective of the wind farm developer to maximize the wind power electrical generation within the land available.



**Figure 1-Generalized Sound Spectra vs. perception and rural community L<sub>90A</sub> background 1/3 octave SPL**

*Is wind turbine noise at a residence much more annoying than traffic noise?* Yes, researchers have found that "Wind turbine noise was perceived by about 85% of the respondents even when the calculated A-weighted SPL were as low as 35.0-37.5 dB. This could be due to the presence of amplitude modulation in the noise, making it easy to detect and difficult to mask by ambient noise." [JASA 116(6), December 2004, pgs 3460-3470, "Perception and annoyance due to wind

turbine noise-a dose-relationship" Eja Pedersen and Kerstin Persson Waye, Dept of Environmental Medicine, Goteborg University, Sweden]

*Why do wind turbine noise immissions of only 35 dBA disturb sleep at night?* This issue is now being studied by the medical profession. The affected residents complain of the middle to high frequency swooshing sounds of the rotating turbine blades at a constant repetitive rate of about 1 hertz plus low frequency noise. The amplitude modulation of the swooshing sound changes continuously. The short time interval between the blades's swooshing sounds described by residents as sometimes having a thump or low frequency banging sound that varies in amplitude up to 10 dBA. This may be a result of phase changes between turbine emissions, turbulence, or an operational mode. The assumptions about wall and window attenuation being 15 dBA or more may not be sufficiently protective considering the relatively high amplitude of the wind turbine's low frequency immission spectra.

*What are the typical wind farm noise immission criteria or standards?* Limits are not consistent and may vary even within a particular country. Example criteria include: Australia-the highest of 35 dBA or  $L_{90} + 5$  dBA, Denmark-40 dBA, France  $L_{90} + 3$  (night) and  $L_{90} + 5$  (day), Germany-40 dBA, Holland-40 dBA, United Kingdom-40 dBA (day) and 43 dBA (night) or  $L_{90} + 5$  dBA, Illinois-Octave frequency band limits: About 50 dBA (day) and about 46 dBA (night), Wisconsin-50 dBA and Michigan-55 dBA.

*What is a reasonable wind farm sound immission limit to protect the health of residences?* We are proposing an immission limit of 35 dBA or  $L_{90A} + 5$  dBA whichever are lower and also C-weighted criteria to address the impacted resident's complaints of wind turbine low frequency noise: For the proposed criteria the dBC sound level at a receiving property shall not exceed  $L_{90A} + 20$  dB. In other words, the dBC operating immission limit shall not be more than 20 dB above the measured dBA ( $L_{90A}$ ) pre-construction nighttime background sound level. A maximum not-to-exceed limit of 50 dBC and 55 dBC is also proposed.

*Why should the dBC immission limit not be permitted to be more than 20 dB above the background measured  $L_{90A}$ ?* The World Health Organization and others have determined a sound emitter's noise that results in a difference between the dBC and dBA value greater than 20 dB will be an annoying low frequency issue.

*Is not  $L_{90A}$  the minimum dBA background noise level?* This is correct, but it is very important to establish the statistical average background noise environment outside a potentially impacted residence during the quietest (10 pm to 4 am) sleeping hours of the night. This nighttime sleep disturbance has generated the majority of the wind farm noise complaints throughout the world. The basis for a community's wind turbine sound immission limits would be the minimum 10 minute nighttime  $L_{90A}$  plus 5 dB for the time period of 10 pm to 7 am. This would become the Nighttime Immission Limits for the proposed wind farm. This can be accomplished with one or several 10 minute measurements during any night when the atmosphere is classified stable with a light wind from the area of the proposed wind farm. The Daytime Limits (7 am to 7 pm) could be set 10 dB above the minimum nighttime  $L_{90A}$  measured noise, but the nighttime criteria will always be the limiting sound levels.

A nearby wind farm meeting these noise immission criteria will be clearly audible to the residents occasionally during nighttime and daytime. Compliance with this noise standard would be determined by repeating the initial nighttime minimum nighttime  $L_{90A}$  tests and adding the dBC ( $L_{eqC}$ ) noise measurement with the turbines on and off. If the nighttime background noise level (turbines off) was found to be slightly higher than the measured

background prior to the wind farm installation, then the results with the turbines on must be corrected to determine compliance with the pre-turbine established sound limits.

The common method used for establishing the background sound level at a proposed wind farm used in many of the studies in Table 1 was to use unattended noise monitors to record hundreds of ten (10) minute measurements to obtain a statistically significant sample over varying wind conditions or a period of weeks. The measured results for daytime and nighttime are combined to determine the statically average wind noise as a function of wind velocity measured at a height of ten (10) meters. This provides an enormous amount of data but the results have little relationship to the wind turbine sound immission or turbine noise impact in nearby residents. The purpose of this exhaustive exercise often only demonstrates how much noise is generated by the wind. In some cases it appears that the data is used to 'prove' that the wind noise masks the turbine's sound immissions.

The most glaring fault with this argument is shown during the frequent nighttime conditions with a stable atmosphere when the wind turbines generate the maximum electricity and noise while the wind at ground level is calm and the background noise level is low. This is the condition of maximum turbine noise impact on nearby residents. It is the condition which most directly causes chronic sleep disruption. Furthermore, this methodology is usually faulty, as much of the wind noise measured by unattended sound monitors is the wind noise generated at the microphone windscreen resulting in totally erroneous results. (See studies in Table 3, esp. Van den Berg)

*Are there additional noise data to be recorded for a pre-wind turbine noise survey near selected dwellings?*

Yes, The measuring sound level meter(s) need to be programmed to include measurement of  $L_{eqA}$ ,  $L_{10A}$ ,  $L_{eq90A}$  and  $L_{eqC}$ ,  $L_{10C}$ ,  $L_{eq90C}$  plus start time & date for each 10 minute sample. These results will be utilized to help validate the  $L_{90}$  data. For example, on a quiet night one might expect  $L_{10}$  and  $L_{90}$  or  $L_{eq}$  to show similar results within 5 to 10 dBA and 10 to 15 dBC. On a windy night or day the difference between  $L_{10}$  and  $L_{90}$  may be more than 20 dBA and 30 dBC. There is also a need to obtain a ten minute time averaged one-third octave band analysis over the frequency range from 6.3 Hz to 10k Hz. The frequency analysis is very helpful for identifying and correcting for extraneous sounds such as interfering insect noise. A standard averaging sound level meter has the capability to perform all of the above acoustic measurements simultaneously and store the results internally. There is a requirement for measurement of the wind velocity near the sound measurement microphone continuously throughout each ten (10) minute recorded noise sample. The ten (10) minute maximum wind speed near the microphone shall not exceed 2 m/s (4.5 mph) and the maximum wind speed for operational tests shall not exceed 4 m/s (9 mph). It is strongly recommended that observed measurements be used for these tests.

*Is there a need to record weather data during the background noise recording survey?* One weather monitor is required at the proposed wind farm on the side nearest the residents. The weather station sensors are at standard ten (10) meter height above ground. It is critical the weather be recorded every ten (10) minutes synchronized with the clocks in the sound level recorders without ambiguity in the start and end time of each ten (10) minute period. The weather station should record wind speed and direction, temperature, humidity and rain.

*Why do Canada and some other countries base the permitted wind turbine noise immission limits on the operational wind velocity at the 10m height wind speed instead of a maximum dBA or  $L_{90} + 5$  dBA immission level?* First, it appears that the wind turbine industry will take advantage of every opportunity to elevate the maximum permitted noise immission level to reduce the setback



distance from the nearby dwellings. Including wind as a masking source in the criteria is one method for elevating the permissible limits. Indeed the background noise level does increase with surface wind speed. When it does occur, it can be argued that the increased wind noise provides some masking of the wind farm turbine noise emission. However, in the middle of the night when the atmosphere is defined as stable (no vertical flow from surface heat radiation) the layers of the lower atmosphere can separate and permit wind velocities at the turbine hubs to be 2 to 4 times the wind velocity at the 10m high wind monitor but remain near calm at ground level. The result is the wind turbines can be operating at or close to full capacity while it is very quiet outside the nearby dwellings.

This is the heart of the wind turbine noise problem for residents within 3 km (approx. two miles) of a wind farm. When the turbines are producing the sound from operation it is quietest outside the surrounding homes. The PhD thesis of P.G. van den Berg "The Sounds of High Winds" is very enlightening on this issue. See also the letter by John Harrison in Ontario "On Wind Turbine Guidelines."

*What sound monitor measurements would be needed for enforcement of the wind turbine sound ordinance?* A similar sound and wind 10 minute series of measurements would be repeated at the pre-wind farm location nearest the resident registering the wind turbine noise complaint, with and without the operation of the wind turbines. An independent acoustics expert should be retained who reports to the County Board or other responsible governing body. This independent acoustics expert shall be responsible for all the acoustic measurements including instrumentation setup, calibration and interpretation of recorded results. An independent acoustical consultant shall also perform all pre-turbine background noise measurements and interpretation of results to establish the Nighttime (and Daytime if applicable) industrial wind turbine sound immission limits. At present the acoustical consultants are retained by, and work directly for, the wind farm developer.

This presents a serious problem with conflict of interest on the part of the consultant. The wind farm developer would like to show the significant amount of wind noise that is present to mask the sounds of the wind turbine immissions. The wind farm impacted community would like to know that wind turbine noise will be only barely perceptible and then only occasionally during the night or daytime.

*Is frequency analysis required either during pre-wind farm background survey or for compliance measurements?* Normally one-third octave or narrower band analysis would only be required if there is a complaint of tones immission from the wind farm. Although only standardized dBA and dBC measurements are required to meet the proposed criteria the addition of one-third octave band analysis is often useful to validate the dBA and dBC results.

### **Proposed Sound Limits**

The simple fact that so many residents complain of low frequency noise from wind turbines is clear evidence that the single A-weighted (dBA) noise descriptor used in most jurisdictions for siting turbines is not adequate. The only other simple audio frequency weighting that is standardized and available on sound level meters is the C-weighting or dBC. A standard sound level meter set to measure dBA is increasingly less sensitive to low frequency below 500 Hz (one octave above middle-C). The same sound level meter set to measure dBC is equally sensitive to all frequencies above 32 Hz (lowest note on grand piano). It is well known that dBC readings are more predictive of perceptual loudness than dBA readings if low frequency sounds are significant.

We are proposing to use the commonly accepted dBA criteria that is based on the pre-existing background sound levels plus a 5 dB allowance for the wind turbine's immissions (e.g.  $L_{90A} + 5$ ) for the audible sounds from wind turbines. But, to address the lower frequencies that are not considered in A-weighted measurements we are proposing to add limits based on dBC. The Proposed Sound Limits are presented in the text box at the end of this paper.

For the current industrial grade wind turbines in the 1.5 to 3 MWatt range, the addition of the dBC requirement will result in an increased distance between wind turbines and the nearby residents. For the generalized graphs shown in Figure 1, the distances would need to be increased significantly. This will result in setbacks in the range of 1 km or greater for the current generation of wind turbines if they are to be located in rural areas where the  $L_{90A}$  background sound levels are 30 dBA or lower. In areas with higher background sound levels, turbines could be located somewhat closer, but still at a distance greater than the 305 m (1000 ft.) or less which are setbacks commonly seen in U.S. based wind turbine standards set by many states and used for wind turbine developments.

## Proposed Wind Turbine Siting Sound Limits

### 1. Audible Sound Limit

- a. No Wind Turbine or group of turbines shall be located so as to cause an exceedance of the pre-construction/operation background sound levels by more than 5 dBA. The background sound levels shall be the  $L_{90A}$  sound descriptor measured during a pre-construction noise study during the quietest time of evening or night. All data recording shall be a series of contiguous ten (10) minute measurements.  $L_{90A}$  results are valid when  $L_{10A}$  results are no more than 10 dBA above  $L_{90A}$  for the same time period. Noise sensitive sites are to be selected based on wind development's predicted worst-case sound emissions (in  $L_{eqA}$  and  $L_{eqC}$ ) which are to be provided by the developer.
- b. Test sites are to be located along the property line(s) of the receiving non-participating property(s).
- c. A 5 dB penalty is applied for tones as defined in IEC 61400-11.

### 2. Low Frequency Sound Limit

- a. The  $L_{eqC}$  and  $L_{90C}$  sound levels from the wind turbine at the receiving property shall not exceed the lower of either:
  - 1)  $L_{eqC} - L_{90A}$  greater than 20 dB outside any occupied structure, or
  - 2) A maximum not-to-exceed sound level of 50 dBC ( $L_{90C}$ ) from the wind turbines without other ambient sounds for properties located at one mile or more from State Highways or other major roads or 55 dBC ( $L_{90C}$ ) for properties closer than one mile.

These limits shall be assessed using the same nighttime and wind/weather conditions required in 1.a. Turbine operating sound immissions ( $L_{eqA}$  and  $L_{eqC}$ ) shall represent worst case sound immissions for stable nighttime conditions with low winds at ground level and winds sufficient for full operating capacity at the hub.

### 3. General Clause

- a. Not to exceed 35 dBA within 30 m. (approx. 100 feet) of any occupied structure.

### 4. Requirements

- a. All instruments must meet ANSI or IEC Precision integrating sound level meter performance specifications.



- b. Procedures must meet ANSI S12.9 and other applicable ANSI standards.
- c. Measurements must be made when ground level winds are 2m/s (4.5 mph) or less. Wind shear in the evening and night often results in low ground level wind speed and nominal operating wind speeds at wind turbine hub heights.
- d. IEC 61400-11 procedures are not suitable for enforcement of these requirements except for the presence of tones.

### **How to Include the Recommended Criteria in Ordinances and/or Community Noise Limits**

This next section presents the definitions, technical requirements, and complaint resolution processes that support the recommended criteria. Following the formal elements is a section discussing the measurement procedures and requirements for enforcement of these criteria. For the purpose of this article the government authority will be referred to as the Local Government Authority (LGA) as a place marker for State, County, Township or other authorized authority. The abbreviation 'WES' is used for industrial scale wind energy system.

## **ELEMENTS OF A WIND ENERGY SYSTEMS LICENSING ORDINANCE FOR SOUND**

### **I. Purpose And Intent.**

Based upon the findings stated above, it is the intended purpose of the LGA to regulate Wind Energy Systems to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of the Town and to establish reasonable and uniform regulations for the operation thereof so as to control potentially dangerous effects of these Systems on the community.

### **II. Definitions.**

The following terms have the meanings indicated:

**"Aerodynamic Sound"** means a noise that is caused by the flow of air over and past the blades of a WES.

**"Ambient Sound"** Ambient noise encompasses all sound present in a given environment, being usually a composite of sounds from many sources near and far. It includes intermittent noise events, such as, from aircraft flying over, dogs barking, wind gusts, mobile farm or construction machinery, and the occasional vehicle traveling along a nearby road. The ambient also includes insect and other nearby sounds from birds and animals or people. The near-by and transient events are all part of the ambient sound environment but are not to be considered part of the background sound. If present, a different time or location should be selected for determining the L<sub>90</sub> background sound levels.

**"Anemometer"** means a device for measuring the speed and direction of the wind.

**"Applicant"** means the individual or business entity that seeks to secure a license under this section of the Town municipal code.

**"A-Weighted Sound Level (dBA)"** A measure of over-all sound pressure level designed to reflect the response of the human ear, which does not respond equally to all frequencies. It is used to describe sound in a manner representative of the human ear's response. It reduces the effects of the low with respect to the frequencies centered around 1000 Hz. The resultant sound level is

said to be “A-weighted” and the units are “dBA.” Sound level meters have an A-weighting network for measuring A-weighted sound levels (dBA) meeting the characteristics and weighting specified in ANSI Specifications for Integrating Averaging Sound Level Meters, S1.43-1997 for Type 1 instruments and be capable of accurate readings (corrections for internal noise and microphone response permitted) at 20 dBA or lower.

“**Background Sound ( $L_{90}$ )** refers to the sounds that would normally be present at least 90% of the time. Background sounds are those heard during lulls in the ambient sound environment. That is, when transient sounds from flora, fauna, and wind are not present. Background sound levels vary during different times of the day and night. Because WES operates 24/7 the background sound levels of interest are those during the quieter periods which are often the evening and night. Sounds from near-by birds and animals or people must be excluded from the background sound test data.

Background sound level (dBA and dBC (as  $L_{90}$ )) is the sound level present for at least 90% of the time during a period of observation that is representative of the quiet time for the soundscape under evaluation and with duration of ten (10) continuous minutes. Several contiguous ten (10) minute tests may be performed in one hour to determine the statistical stability of the sound environment. Longer term tests, such as 24 hours or multiple days are not appropriate since the purpose is to define the quiet time background sound level. It is defined by the  $L_{90A}$  and  $L_{90C}$  descriptors. It may be considered to be the quietest one (1) minute during a ten (10) minute test.  $L_{90A}$  results are valid only when  $L_{10A}$  results are no more than 10 dBA above  $L_{90A}$  for the same time period.  $L_{10C}$  less  $L_{90C}$  should not exceed 15 dBC to be valid.

Measurement periods such as at dusk when bird and insect activity is high or the early morning hours when the ‘dawn chorus’ is present are not acceptable measurement times. Further, background  $L_{90}$  sound levels documenting the pre-construction baseline conditions should be determined when the ten minute average wind speed is 2 m/s (4.5 mph) or less at the ground level/microphone location.

“**Blade Passage Frequency**” (BPF) means the frequency at which the blades of a turbine pass a particular point during each revolution (e.g. lowest point or highest point in rotation) in terms of events per second. A three bladed turbine rotating at 28 rpm would have a BPF of 1.4 Hz. [E.g. ((3 blades times 28rpm)/60 seconds per minute = 1.4 Hz BPF)]

“**C-Weighted Sound Level (dBC)**” Similar in concept to the A-Weighted sound Level (dBA) but C-weighting does not de-emphasize the frequencies below 1k Hz as A-weighting does. It is used for measurements that must include the contribution of low frequencies in a single number representing the entire frequency spectrum. Sound level meters have a C-weighting network for measuring C-weighted sound levels (dBC) meeting the characteristics and weighting specified in ANSI S1.43-1997 Specifications for Integrating Averaging Sound Level Meters for Type 1 instruments.

“**Decibel (dB)**” A dimensionless unit which denotes the ratio between two quantities that are proportional to power, energy or intensity. One of these quantities is a designated reference by which all other quantities of identical units are divided. The sound pressure level ( $L_p$ ) in decibels is equal to 10 times the logarithm (to the base 10) of the ratio between the pressure squared divided by the reference pressure squared. The reference pressure used in acoustics is 20 MicroPascals.

“**Frequency**” The number of oscillations or cycles per unit of time. Acoustical frequency is usually expressed in units of Hertz (Hz) where one Hz is equal to one cycle per second.

**“Height”** means the total distance measured from the grade of the property as existed prior to the construction of the wind energy system, facility, tower, turbine, or related facility at the base to its highest point.

**“Hertz (Hz)”** Frequency of sound expressed by cycles per second.

**“Impulsive Sound”** refers to short-term acoustical impulses typically lasting less than one second each. It may be the only sound emitted from a noise source or it may be a component of a more complex sound. For evaluation of wind turbines, impulsive sound includes swishing or thumping sounds.

**“Infra-Sound”** sound with energy in the frequency range of 20 Hz and below is considered to be infrasound is normally considered to not be audible unless in relatively high amplitude. The most significant exterior noise induced dwelling vibration occurs in the frequency range between 5 Hz and 50 Hz. Moreover, even levels below the threshold of audibility can still cause measurable resonances inside dwelling interiors. Conditions that support or magnify resonance may also exist in human body cavities and organs under certain conditions, although no specific test for infrasound is provided in this document, its presence will be accounted for in the comparison of dBA and dBC sound levels for the complaint test provided later in this document. See low-frequency sound (LFN) for more information.

**“Low Frequency Sound (LFN)”** refers to sounds with energy in the lower frequency range of 20 to 200 Hz. LFN is deemed to be excessive when the difference between a C-weighted sound pressure level and an A-weighted sound pressure level is greater than 20 decibels at any measurement point outside or inside a noise sensitive receptor site, residence, or other occupied structure. E.G. C-A>20 dB.

**“Measurement Point (MP)”** means location where sound and/or vibration measurements are taken such that no significant obstruction blocks sound and vibration from the site. The Measurement Point should be located so as to not be near large objects such as buildings and in the line-of-sight to the nearest turbines. Proximity to large buildings or other structures should be twice the largest dimension of the structure, if possible.

**“Measurement Wind Speed”** For measurements conducted to establish the background sound pressure levels (dBA, dBC,  $L_{90\ 10\ min}$ , and etc.) the wind speed at the microphone’s Measurement Point shall average 2 m/s (4.5 mph) or less for valid background measurements. For valid measurements conducted to establish the post-construction sound level the wind speed at the microphone’s Measurement Point shall not exceed 4m/s (9 mph) average and the wind speed at the WES blade height shall be at or above the nominal rated wind speed. For purposes of enforcement, the wind speed and direction at the WES blade height shall be selected to reproduce the conditions leading to the enforcement action while also restricting wind speeds at the microphone to 4 m/s (9 mph).

For purposes of models used to predict the sound levels and sound pressure levels of the WES to be submitted with the Application, the Wind Speed shall be the speed that will result in the worst-case dBA and dBC sound levels in the community adjacent the nearest WES. For the purpose of constructing the model the wind direction shall consider the dominant wind direction for the seasons from the late Spring to early Fall. If other wind directions may cause levels to exceed those of the predominant wind direction at nearby sensitive receptors, these levels and conditions shall be included in the Application.

**“Mechanical Noise”** means sound produced as a byproduct of the operation of the mechanical components of a WES(s) such as the gearbox, generator and transformers.

**"Noise"** means any unwanted sound. Not all noise needs to be excessively loud to represent an annoyance or interference.

**"Project Boundary"** means the external property boundaries of parcels owned by or leased by the WES developers.

**"Property Line"** means the recognized and mapped property parcel boundary line.

**"Pure Tone"** A sound for which the sound pressure is a simple sinusoidal function of the time, and characterized by its singleness of pitch. Pure tones can be part of a more complex sound wave that has other characteristics.

**"Qualified Independent Acoustical Consultant"** Qualifications for persons conducting baseline and other measurements and reviews related to the application for a WES or for enforcement actions against an operating WES include, at a minimum, demonstration of competence in the specialty of community noise testing and Full Membership in the Institute of Noise Control Engineers (INCE). Certifications such as Professional Engineer (P.E.) do not test for competence in acoustical principles and measurement and are thus not, without further qualification, appropriate for work under this document. The Independent Qualified Acoustical Consultant can have no financial or other connection to a WES developer or related company.

**"Sensitive Receptor"** means places or structures intended for human habitation, whether inhabited or not, public parks, state and federal wildlife areas, the manicured areas of recreational establishments designed for public use, including but not limited to golf courses, camp grounds and other nonagricultural state or federal licensed businesses. These areas are more likely to be sensitive to the exposure of the noise, vibration, shadow or flicker, etc. generated by a WES or WESF. These areas include, but are not limited to: schools, daycare centers, elder care facilities, hospitals, places of seated assemblage, non-agricultural businesses and residences.

**"Sound"** A fluctuation of air pressure which is propagated as a wave through air

**"Sound Power"** The total sound energy radiated by a source per unit time. The unit of measurement is the watt. Abbreviated as  $L_w$ . This information is determined for the WES manufacturer under laboratory conditions specified by IEC 61400-11 and provided to the local developer for use in computer model construction. It cannot be assumed that these values represent the highest sound output for any operating condition. They reflect the operating conditions required to meet the IEC 61400-11 requirements. The lowest frequency is 50 Hz for acoustic power ( $L_w$ ) requirement in IEC 61400-11. This Ordinance requires wind turbine certified acoustic power ( $L_w$ ) levels at rated load for the total frequency range from 6.3 Hz to 10k Hz in one-third octave frequency bands tabulated to the nearest 0.1 dB. The frequency range of 6.3 Hz to 10k Hz shall be used throughout this Ordinance for all sound level modeling, measuring and reporting.

**"Sound Pressure"** The instantaneous difference between the actual pressure produced by a sound wave and the average or barometric pressure at a given point in space.

**"Sound Pressure Level (SPL)"** 20 times the logarithm, to the base 10, of the ratio of the pressure of the sound measured to the reference pressure, which is 20 micronewtons per square meter. In equation form, sound pressure level in units of decibels is expressed as  $SPL (dB) = 20 \log p/pr$ .

**"Spectrum"** The description of a sound wave's resolution into its components of frequency and amplitude. The WES manufacturer is required to supply a one-third octave band frequency spectrum of the wind turbine sound emission at 90% of rated power. The published sound



spectrum is often presented as A-weighted values. This information is used to project the wind farm sound levels at all locations of interest. Confirmation of the projected sound spectrum can be determined with a small portable one-third octave band frequency (spectrum) analyzer. The frequency range of interest for wind turbine noise is approximately 10 Hz to 10k Hz.

**“Statistical Noise Levels”** Sounds that vary in level over time, such as road traffic noise and most community noise, are commonly described in terms of the statistical exceedance levels  $L_{AN}$ , where  $L_{AN}$  is the A-weighted sound pressure level exceeded for N% of a given measurement period. For example,  $L_{10}$  is the noise level exceeded for 10% of the time. Of particular relevance, are:  $L_{A10}$  and  $L_{C10}$  the noise level exceed for 10% of the ten (10) minute interval. This is commonly referred to as the average maximum noise level.  $L_{A90}$  and  $L_{C90}$  the noise level exceeded for 90% of the ten (10) minute sample period. The  $L_{90}$  noise level is described as the average minimum background sound level (in the absence of the source under consideration), or simply the background level.  $L_{eq}$  is the frequency-weighted equivalent noise level (basically the average noise level). It is defined as the steady sound level that contains the same amount of acoustical energy as the corresponding time-varying sound.

**“Tonal sound (sometimes Pure Tone)”** A sound for which the sound pressure is a simple sinusoidal function of the time, and characterized by its singleness of pitch. Tonal sound can be simple or complex.

**“Wind Energy Systems (WES)”** means equipment that converts and then transfers energy from the wind into usable forms of energy on a large, industrial scale for commercial or utility purposes. Small scale wind systems of less than 170 feet in height with a 60-foot rotor diameter and a nameplate capacity of less than 100 kilowatts or less are exempt from this definition and the provisions of this Ordinance.

**“Wind Turbine” or “Turbine” (WTi)** means a mechanical device which captures the kinetic energy of the wind and converts it into electricity. The primary components of a wind turbine are the blade assembly, electrical generator and tower.

#### IV. APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR WIND ENERGY SYSTEMS

A. Any Person desiring to secure a Wind Energy Systems license shall file an application together with two additional copies of the application with the LGA Clerk.

B. The application shall be on a form provided by the LGA Clerk.

##### **A. Information to be submitted with Application:**

1. Information regarding the: make and model of the turbines, Sound Power Levels ( $L_w$ ) for each one-third octave band from 6.3 Hz up through 10,000 Hz, and a projection showing the expected dBA and dBC sound levels computed using the one-third octave band sound power levels ( $L_w$ ) with appropriate corrections for modeling and measurement accuracy tolerances and directional patterns of the WTi for all areas within and to one (1) mile from the project boundary for the wind speed, direction and operating mode that would result in the worst case WTi sound emissions.

The prediction model shall assume that the winds at hub height are sufficient for the highest sound emission operating mode even though the enforcement tests will be with ground level winds of 10 mph or less. This is to accommodate enforcement under weather conditions where there is significant difference in the wind speed between ground and hub heights. This condition



often occurs during summer evenings when wind shear is affected by the reduction in solar heating of the earth's surface between sunset and sunrise.

The projection may be by means of computer model but shall include a description of all assumptions made in the model's construction and algorithms. If the model does not consider the effects of wind direction, geography of the terrain, and/or the effects of reinforcement from coherent sounds or tones from the turbines these should be identified and other means used to adjust the model's output to account for these factors. These results may be displayed as a contour map of the predicted levels, but should also include a table showing the predicted levels at noise sensitive receptor sites and residences within the model's boundaries. The predicted values must include dBA and dBC values but shall also include un-weighted octave band sound pressure levels from 8 Hz to 10k Hz in data tables.

2. The Town reserves the right to require the preparation of (a) a preconstruction noise survey for each proposed Wind Turbine location conducted per procedures provided here-in and in the Appendix showing background dBA and dBC sound levels ( $L_{90(10min)}$ ) over one or more valid ten (10) minute continuous measurement periods prior to approval for the final layout and construction as part of an environmental study evaluating what impact the project may have on sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the proposed WES sites.

a. If any proposed wind farm project locates a WES within one mile of a sensitive receptor these studies are mandatory. The preconstruction baseline studies shall be conducted by an Independent Qualified Acoustical Consultant selected by the LGA.

b. The LGA shall hire an Independent Qualified Acoustical Consultant to conduct the sound study for the LGA as specified in this document. However, the applicant shall be responsible for paying the consultant's fees and costs associated with conducting the study. These fees and cost shall be negotiated with the consultant and determined prior to any work being done on the study. The applicant shall be required to set aside 100% of these fees in an escrow account managed by the LGA, before the study is commenced by the consultant. Payment for this study does not require the WES developer's acceptance of the study's results.

c. If the review shows that the predicted dBA or dBC sound levels exceed the criteria specified in this document then the application cannot be approved.

3. The LGA will refer the application to the LGA engineer (if qualified in acoustics) or an independent qualified acoustical consultant for further review and comparison against the predicted dBA and dBC sound levels supplied with the application. The reasonably necessary costs associated with the review of the sound study shall be the responsibility of the applicant, in accord with the terms of this ordinance.

## V. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSING

This ordinance is intended to promote the safety and health of the community through criteria limiting sound emissions during operation of Wind Energy Systems. It is recognized that the requirements herein are neither exclusive, nor exhaustive. In instances where a health or safety concern is known to the wind project developer or identified by other means with regard to any application for a Wind Energy System, additional and/or more restrictive conditions may be included in the license to address such concerns. All rights are reserved to impose additional restrictions as circumstances warrant. Such additional or more restrictive conditions may include, without limitation (a) greater setbacks, (b) more restrictive noise limitations, or (c) limits

restricting operation during night time periods or for any other conditions deemed reasonable to protect the community.

#### **A. Sound.**

**1. Sound Regulations Compliance:** A WES shall be considered in violation of the conditional use permit unless the applicant demonstrates that the project complies with all sound level limits. Sound levels in excess of the limits established in this ordinance shall be grounds for the LGA to order immediate shut down of all non-compliant WTi.

**2. Post-Construction Sound Measurements:** Within twelve months of the date when the project is fully operational, and within four weeks of the anniversary date of the pre-construction background noise measurements, repeat the existing sound environment measurements taken before the project approval. Post-construction sound level measurements shall be taken both with all WES's running and with all WES's off. At the discretion of the Town, the Pre-construction background sound levels ( $L_{90A}$ ) can be substituted for the "all WES off" tests if a random sampling of 10% of the pre-construction study sites shows that background  $L_{90A}$  and C conditions have not changed more than  $\pm 5$  dB (dBA and dBC) measured under the pre-construction nighttime meteorological conditions. The post-construction measurements will be reported to the LGA (available for public review) using the same format as used for the preconstruction sound studies. Post-construction noise studies shall be conducted by a firm chosen by the LGA. Costs of these studies are to be reimbursed by the Licensee in a similar manner to that described above. The wind farm developer's own consultant is free to observe the publicly retained consultant at the convenience of the latter. The WES developer/applicant shall provide all technical information and wind farm data required by the independent qualified acoustical consultant before, during, and/or after any acoustical studies required by this document and for local area acoustical measurements.

### **3. Sound Limits**

#### **1. Audible Sound Limit**

- a. No WTi or WES shall be located so as to cause an exceedance of the pre-construction/operation background sound levels by more than 5 dBA. The background sound levels shall be the  $L_{90A}$  sound descriptor measured during a pre-construction noise study during the quietest time of night (10pm until 4am). All data sampling shall be one or more contiguous ten (10) minute measurements.  $L_{90A}$  results are valid when  $L_{10A}$  results are no more than 10 dBA above  $L_{90A}$  for the same time period and  $L_{10C}$  less  $L_{90C}$  is no more than 15 dBC. Noise sensitive sites are to be selected based on wind development's predicted worst-case sound emissions (in  $L_{eqA}$  and  $L_{eqC}$ ) which are to be provided by developer.
- b. Test sites are to be located along the property line(s) of the receiving non-participating property(s).
- c. A 5 dB penalty is applied for tones as defined in IEC 61400-11.

#### **2. Low Frequency Sound Limit**

- a. The  $L_{eqC}$  and  $L_{90C}$  sound levels from the wind turbine at the receiving property shall not exceed either:
  - 1)  $L_{eqC} - L_{90A}$  greater than 20 dB outside any occupied structure, or
  - 2) A maximum not-to-exceed sound level of 50 dBC ( $L_{90C}$ ) from the wind turbines without contribution from other ambient sounds for properties

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located one mile or more away from state highways or other major roads or 55 dBC (L<sub>90C</sub>) for properties closer than one mile.

These limits shall be assessed using the same nighttime and wind/weather conditions required in 1.a. Turbine operating sound immissions shall represent worst case sound immissions for stable nighttime conditions with low winds at ground level and winds sufficient for full operating capacity at the hub.

### 3. General Clause

- a. Not to exceed 35 dBA<sub>Leq 10 min.</sub> within 30 m. (approx. 100 feet) of any occupied structure.

**4. Operations** Exceeding any of the limits in this section will be considered as proof that the WES/WTi is non-compliant and must be shut down immediately.

### 5. Requirements

- a. All instruments must meet ANSI or IEC Type 1 Precision integrating sound level meter performance specifications.
- b. Procedures must meet ANSI S12.9 Part 3 including the addendum in the Appendix to this document. Where there are differences between the procedures and definitions of this document and ANSI standards the procedures and definitions of this document will be applied. Where a standard's requirements may conflict with other standards the most stringent requirement shall be followed.
- c. Measurements for background sound levels must be made when ground level winds are 2m/s (4.5 mph) or less with wind speeds at the hub at or above nominal operating requirements and for other tests when ground level winds are 4m/s (9 mph). Weather in the night often results in low ground level wind speed and nominal operating wind speeds at wind turbine hub heights.
- d. IEC 61400-11 procedures are not suitable for enforcement of these requirements except for the presence of tones.

### 4. Complaint Resolution

1. The owner/operator of the WES shall respond within five (5) business days after notified of a noise complaint by any property owner within the project boundary and a one-mile radius beyond the project boundary.
2. The tests shall be performed by a qualified acoustical consultant acceptable to the complainant and the local agency charged with enforcement of this ordinance.
3. Testing shall commence within ten (10) working days of the request. If testing cannot be initiated within ten (10) days, the WES(s) in question shall be shut down until the testing can be started.
4. A copy of the test results shall be sent to the property owner, and the LGA's Planning or Zoning department within thirty (30) days of test completion.
5. If a Complaint is made, the presumption shall be that it is reasonable. The LGA shall undertake an investigation of the alleged operational violation by a qualified individual mutually acceptable to the LGA.
  - a) The reasonable cost and fees incurred by the LGA in retaining said qualified individual shall be reimbursed by the owner of the WESF.

- b) Funds for this assessment shall be paid or put into an escrow account prior to the study and payment shall be independent of the study findings.
- 6. After the investigation, if the LGA reasonably concludes that operational violations are shown to be caused by the WESF, the licensee/operator/owner shall use reasonable efforts to mitigate such problems on a case-by-case basis including such measures as not operating during the night time or other noise sensitive period if such operation was the cause of the complaints.

#### **5. Reimbursement of Fees and Costs.**

Licensee/operator/owner agrees to reimburse the LGA 's actual reasonable fees and costs incurred in the preparation, negotiation, administration and enforcement of this Ordinance, including, without limitation, the LGA 's attorneys' fees, engineering and/or consultant fees, LGA meeting and hearing fees and the costs of public notices. If requested by the LGA the funds shall be placed in an escrow account under the management of the LGA. The preceding fees are payable within thirty (30) days of invoice. Unpaid invoices shall bear interest at the rate of 1% per month until paid. The LGA may recover all reasonable costs of collection, including attorneys' fees.

## **MEASUREMENT PROCEDURES**

### **APPENDIX TO WIND ENERGY SYSTEMS LICENSING ORDINANCE FOR SOUND**

#### **I. Introduction**

The potential impact of sound and sound induced building vibration associated with the operation of wind powered electric generators is often a primary concern for citizens living near proposed wind energy systems (WES(s)). This is especially true of projects located near homes, residential neighborhoods, businesses, schools, and hospitals in quiet residential and rural communities. Determining the likely sound and vibration impacts is a highly technical undertaking and requires a serious effort in order to collect reliable and meaningful data for both the public and decision makers.

This protocol is based in part on criteria published in American National Standards S12.9 - Quantities and Procedures for Description and Measurement of Environmental Sound, and S12.18 and for the measurement of sound pressure level outdoors.

The purpose is to first, establish a consistent and scientifically sound procedure for evaluating existing background levels of audible and low frequency sound in a WES project area, and second to use the information provided by the Applicant in its Application showing the predicted over-all sound levels in terms of dBA and dBC<sup>16</sup> as part of the required information submitted with the application.

These values shall be presented as overlays to the applicant's iso-level plot plan graphics (dBA and dBC) and in tabular form with location information sufficient to permit comparison of the baseline results to the predicted levels. This comparison will use the level limits of the ordinance to determine the likely impact operation of a new wind energy system project will have on the

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<sup>16</sup> Calculated from one-third octave band sound power levels ( $L_W$  per IEC 61400-11) provided by the wind turbine manufacturer covering the frequency range from 6.3 Hz to 10,000 HZ or higher.



existing community soundscape. If the comparison demonstrates that the WES project will not exceed any of the level limits the project will be considered to be within allowable limits for safety and health. If the Applicant submits only partial information required for this comparison the application cannot be approved. In all cases the burden to establish the operation as meeting safety and health limits will be on the Applicant.

Next it addresses requirements for the sound propagation model to be supplied with the application.

Finally, if the project is approved, this Appendix covers the study needed to compare the post-build sound levels to the predictions and the baseline study. The level limits in the ordinance apply to the post-build study. In addition, if there have been any complaints about WES sound or low frequency noise emissions by any resident of an occupied dwelling that property will be included in the post-build study for evaluation against the rules for sound level limits and compliance.

The characteristics of the proposed WES project and the features of the surrounding environment will influence the design of the sound and vibration study. Site layout, types of WES(s) selected and the existence of other significant local audible and low frequency sound sources and sensitive receptors should be taken into consideration when designing a sound and vibration study. The work will be performed by an independent qualified acoustical consultant for both the pre-construction background and post-construction sound studies as described in the body of the ordinance.

## **II. Instrumentation**

All instruments and other tools used to measure audible, inaudible and low frequency sound shall meet the requirements for ANSI or IEC Type 1 Integrating Averaging Sound Level Meter with one-third octave band analyzer with frequency range from 6.3 Hz to 20k Hz and capability to simultaneously measure dBA  $L_N$  and dBC  $L_N$ . The instrument must also be capable of measuring low level background sounds down to 20 dBA. Measurements shall only be made with the instrument manufacturer's approved wind screen. A compatible acoustic field calibrator is required with certified  $\pm 0.2$  dB accuracy. Portable meteorological measurement requirements are outlined in ANSI S12.9 Part 3 and are required to be located within 5m of the sound measuring microphone. The microphone shall be located at a height of 1.2 to 1.5 meters for all tests unless circumstances require a different measurement position. In that case, the reasons shall be documented and include any adjustments needed to make the results correspond to the preferred measurement location.

## **III. Measurement of Pre-Construction Sound Environment (Base-lines)**

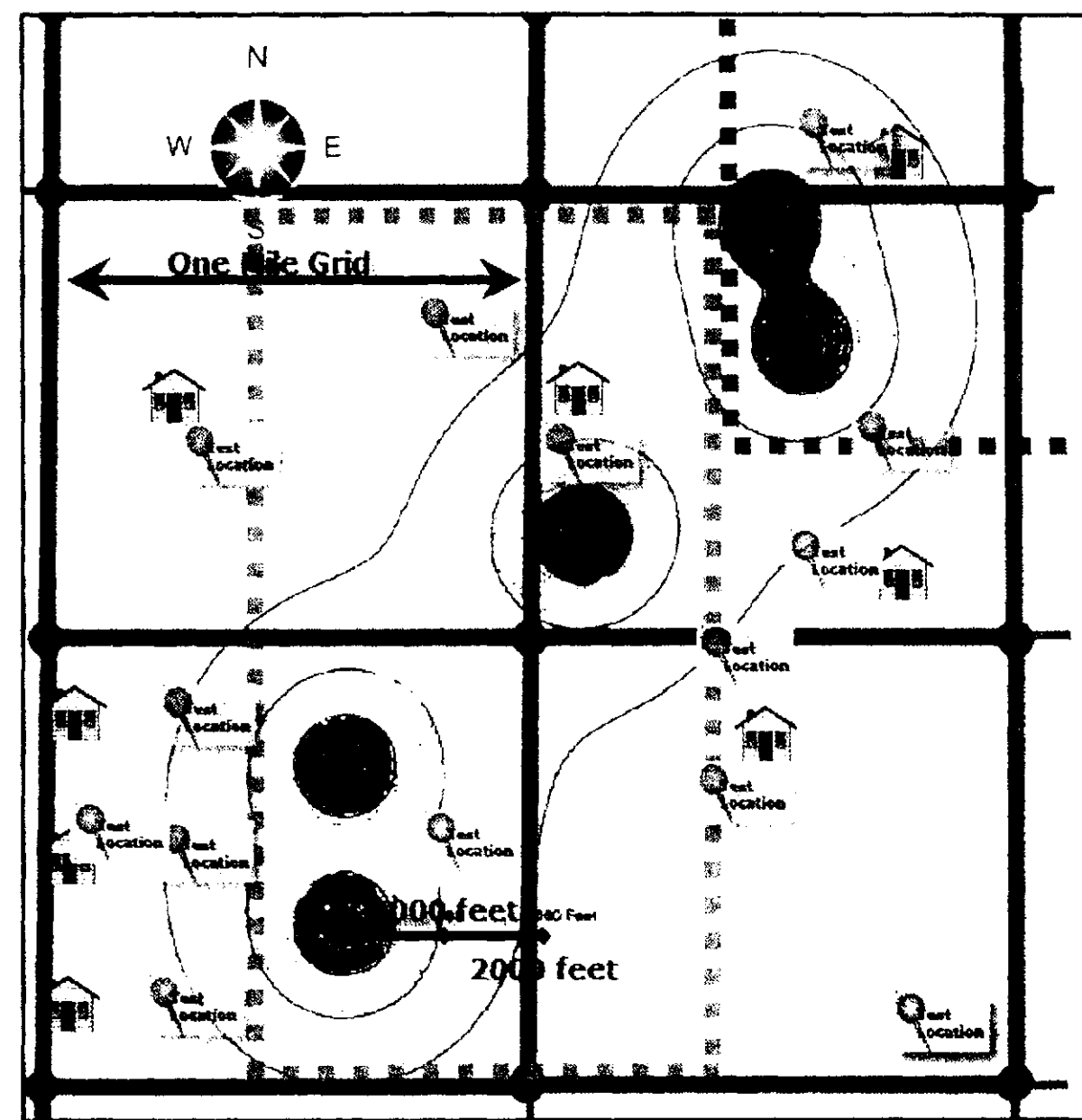
An assessment of the proposed WES project areas existing sound environment is necessary in order to predict the likely impact resulting from a proposed project. The following guidelines must be used in developing a reasonable estimate of an area's existing background sound environment. All testing is to be performed by an independent qualified acoustical consultant approved by the LGA as provided in the body of the ordinance. The WES applicant may file objections detailing any concerns it may have with the LGA's selection. These concerns will be addressed in the study. Objections must be filed prior to the start of the noise study. All measurements are to be conducted with ANSI or IEC Type 1 certified and calibrated test equipment per reference specification at the end of this Appendix. Test results will be reported to the LGA or its appointed representative.



**Sites with No Existing Wind Energy Systems (Base-line Sound Study)**

Sound level measurements shall be taken as follows:

The results of the model showing the predicted worst case dBA and dBC sound emissions of the proposed WES project will be overlaid on a map (or separate dBA and dBC maps) of the project area. An example (right) shows an approximately two (2) mile square section with iso-level contour lines prepared by the applicant, sensitive receptors (homes) and locations selected for the baseline dBA and dBC sound tests whichever are the controlling metric. The test points shall



be located at the property line bounding the property of the turbine's host closest to the wind turbine. Additional sites may be added if appropriate. A grid comprised of one (1) mile boundaries (each grid cell is one (1) square mile) should be used to assist in identifying between two (2) to ten (10) measurement points per cell. The grid shall extend to a minimum of one (1) mile beyond the perimeter of the project boundary. This may be extended to more than one mile at the discretion of the LGA. The measurement points shall be selected to represent the noise sensitive receptor sites based on the anticipated sound propagation from the combined WTi in the project. Usually, this will be the closest WTi. If there is more than one WTi near-by then more than one test site may be required.

The intent is to anticipate the locations along the bounding property line that will receive the highest sound immissions. The site that will be most likely negatively affected by the WES project's sound emissions should be given first priority in testing. These sites may include sites adjacent to occupied dwellings or other noise sensitive receptor sites. Sites shall be selected to represent the locations where the background soundscapes reflect the quietest locations of the sensitive receptor sites. Background sound levels (and one-third octave band sound pressure levels for the sound measuring consultants file) shall be obtained according to the definitions and procedures provided in the ordinance and recognized acoustical testing practice and standards.

All properties within the proposed WES project boundaries will be considered for this study.

One test shall be conducted during the period defined by the months of April through November with the preferred time being the months of June through August. These months are normally associated with more contact with the outdoors and when homes may have open windows during the evening and night. Unless directed otherwise by the LGA the season chosen for testing will represent the background soundscape for other seasons. At the discretion of the LGA, tests may be scheduled for other seasons.

All measurement points (MPs) shall be located with assistance from with the LGA staff and property owner(s) and positioned such that no significant obstruction (building, trees, etc.) blocks sound and vibration from the nearest proposed WES site.

Duration of measurements shall be a minimum of ten continuous minutes for each criterion at each location. The duration must include at least 6 minutes that are not affected by transient sounds from near-by and non-nature sources. Multiple 10 minute samples over longer periods such as 30 minutes or one (1) hour may be used to improve the reliability of the  $L_{90}$  values. The ten minute sample with the lowest valid  $L_{90}$  values will be used to define the background sound.

The tests at each site selected for this study shall be taken during the expected 'quietest period of the day or night' as appropriate for the site. For the purpose of determining background sound characteristics the preferred testing time is from 10pm until 4 am. If circumstances indicated that a different time of the day should be sampled the test may be conducted at the alternate time if approved by the Town.

Sound level measurements must be made on a weekday of a non-holiday week. Weekend measurements may be taken at selected sites where there are weekend activities that may be affected by WTi sound.

Measurements must be taken at 1.2 to 1.5 meters above the ground and at least 15 feet from any reflective surface following ANSI 12.9 Part 3 protocol including selected options and other requirements outlined later in this Section.

#### Reporting

1. For each Measurement Point and for each measurement period, provide each of the following measurements:

- a.  $L_{Aeq}$ ,  $L_{10}$ , and  $L_{90}$ , in dBA
- b.  $L_{Ceq}$ ,  $L_{10}$ , and  $L_{90}$ , in dBC

2. A narrative description of any intermittent sounds registered during each measurement. This may be augmented with video and audio recordings.

3. A narrative description of the steady sounds that form the background soundscape. This may be augmented with video and audio recordings.

4. Wind speed and direction at the Measurement Point, humidity and temperature at time of measurement will be included in the documentation. Corresponding information from the nearest 10 meter weather reporting station shall also be obtained.

Measurements taken when wind speeds exceed 2m/s (4.5 mph) at the microphone location will not be considered valid for this study. A windscreen of the type recommended by the monitoring instrument's manufacturer must be used for all data collection.

5. Provide a map and/or diagram clearly showing (Using plot plan provided by LGA or Applicant):

- The layout of the project area, including topography, the project boundary lines, and property lines.
- The locations of the Measurement Points.
- The minimum and maximum distance between any Measurement Points.
- The location of significant local non-WES sound and vibration sources.
- The distance between all MPs and significant local sound sources. And,
- The location of all sensitive receptors including but not limited to: schools, day-care centers, hospitals, residences, residential neighborhoods, places of worship, and elderly care facilities.

### **Sites with Existing Wind Energy Systems**

Two complete sets of sound level measurements must be taken as defined below:

1. One set of measurements with the wind generator(s) off unless the LGA elects to substitute the sound data collected for the background sound study collected as part of an earlier baseline study. Wind speeds must be suitable for background testing.
2. One set of measurements with the wind generator(s) running with wind speed at hub height sufficient to meet nominal power output or higher and at 2 m/s or below at the microphone location. Conditions should reflect the worst case sound emissions from the WES project. This will normally involve tests taken during the evening or night when winds are calm (2m/sec or less) at the ground surface yet, at hub height, sufficient to operate the turbines.

Sound level measurements and meteorological conditions at the microphone shall be taken and documented as discussed above.

### **Sound level Estimate for Proposed Wind Energy Systems (when adding more WTi to existing project)**

In order to estimate the sound impact of the proposed WES project on the existing environment an estimate of the sound produced by the proposed WES(s) under worst-case conditions for producing sound emissions must be provided. This study may be conducted by a firm chosen by the WES operator with oversight provided by the LGA.

The qualifications of the firm should be presented along with details of the procedure that will be used, software applications, and any limitations to the software or prediction methods.

Provide the manufacturer's sound power level ( $L_w$ ) characteristics for the proposed WES(s) operating at full load utilizing the methodology in IEC 61400-11 Wind Turbine Noise Standard. Provide one-third octave band  $L_w$  sound power level information from 6.3 Hz to 10k Hz. Furnish the data with and without A-weighting. Provide sound pressure levels predicted for the WES(s) in combination and at full operation and at maximum sound power output for all areas where the predictions indicate dBA levels of 30 dBA and above. The same area shall be used for reporting the predicted dBC levels. Contour lines shall be in increments of 5 dB.

Present tables with the predicted sound levels for the proposed WES(s) in dBA, dBC and at all octave band centers (8 Hz to 10k Hz) for distances of 500, 1000, 1500, 2000, 2500 and 5000 feet from the center of the area with the highest density of WES(s). For projects with multiple WES(s), the combined sound level impact for all WES(s) operating at full load must be estimated.

The above tables must include the impact (increased dBA and dBC above baseline  $L_{90}$  Background sound levels) of the WES operations on all residential and other noise sensitive receiving locations within the project boundary. To the extent possible, the tables should include the sites tested in the background study.

Provide a contour map of the expected sound level from the new WES(s), using 5 dBA and 5 dBC increments created by the proposed WES(s) extending out to a distance of at least 2500 feet from the project boundary or the 35 dBA or 50 dBC boundary whichever is greater.

Provide a description of the impact of the proposed sound from the WES project on the existing environment. The results should anticipate the receptor sites that will be most negatively impacted by the WES project and to the extent possible provide data for each MP that are likely to be selected in the background sound study (note the sensitive receptor MPs):

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1. Report expected changes to existing sound levels for  $L_{Aeq}$ ,  $L_{10}$  and  $L_{90}$ , in dBA
2. Report expected changes to existing sound levels for  $L_{Ceq}$ ,  $L_{10}$  and  $L_{90}$ , in dBC
3. Report the predicted sound pressure levels for each of the 1/1 octave bands as un-weighted dB in tabular form from 8 Hz to 10k Hz.
4. Report all assumptions made in arriving at the estimate of impact, any limitations that might cause the sound levels to exceed the values of the estimate, and any conclusions reached regarding the potential effects on people living near the project area. If the effects of coherence, worst case weather, or operating conditions are not reflected in the model a discussion of how these factors could increase the predicted values is required.
5. Include an estimate of the number of hours of operation expected from the proposed WES(s) and under what conditions the WES(s) would be expected to run. Any differences from the information filed with the Application should be addressed.

#### **IV. Post-Construction Measurements**

Post Construction Measurements should be conducted by a qualified noise consultant selected by and under the direction of the LGA. The requirements of this Appendix for Sites with Existing Wind Energy Systems shall apply

1. Within twelve months of the date when the project is fully operational, and within two weeks of the anniversary date of the Pre-construction ambient noise measurements, repeat the existing sound environment measurements taken before the project approval. Post-construction sound level measurements shall be taken both with all WES(s) running and with all WES(s) off except as provided the ordinance.
2. Report post-construction measurements to the LGA using the same format as used for the background sound study.
- 3 Project Boundary: A continuous line encompassing all WES(s) and related equipment associated with the WES project.

#### **V. REFERENCES**

**ANSI/ASA S12.9-1993/Part 3 (R2008) - American National Standard Quantities and Procedures for Description and Measurement of Environmental Sound, Part 3: Short-Term Measurements with an Observer Present.**

This standard is the second in a series of parts concerning description and measurement of outdoor environmental sound. The standard describes recommended procedures for measurement of short-term, time-average environmental sound outdoors at one or more locations in a community for environmental assessment or planning for compatible land uses and for other purposes such as demonstrating compliance with a regulation. These measurements are distinguished by the requirement to have an observer present. Sound may be produced by one or more separate, distributed sources of sound such as a highway, factory, or airport. Methods are given to correct the measured levels for the influence of background sound.



For the purposes of this ordinance the options that are provided in ANSI S12.9-Part 3 (2008) shall be applied with the additional following requirements:

**Wind Turbine Siting Acoustical Measurements**  
**ANSI S12.9 Part 3 Selection of options and other requirements**

- 5.2 background sound: Use definition (1) 'long-term'
- 5.3 long-term background sound: The  $L_{90}$  excludes short term background sounds
- 5.4 basic measurement period: Ten (10) minutes  $L_{90(10 \text{ min})}$
- 5.6 Sound Measuring Instrument: Type 1 integrating meeting ANSI S1.43
- 6.5 Windscreen: Required
- 7.1 Long-term background sound
- 7.2 Data collection Methods: Second method Observed samples to avoid contamination by short term sounds (purpose: to avoid loss of statistical data)
- 8 Source(s) Data Collection: All requirements in ANSI S12.18 Method #2 precision to the extent possible while still permitting testing of the conditions that lead to complaints.
- 8.3(a) All meteorological observations required at both (not either) microphone and nearest 10m weather reporting station.
- 8.3(b) For a 10 minute sound measurement to be valid the wind velocity shall not exceed 2m/s (4.5 mph) measured less than 5m from the microphone. Compliance sound measurements shall not be taken when winds exceed 4m/s.
- 8.3(c) In addition to the required acoustic calibration checks the sound measuring instrument internal noise floor must also be checked at the end of each series of ten minute measurements and no less frequently than once per day. Insert the microphone into the acoustic calibrator with the calibrator signal off. Record the observed dBA and dBC reading from the sound level meter or other recording instrument to determine an approximation of the instrument self noise. This calibrator covered microphone must demonstrate that the results of this test are at least 5 dB below the immediately previous ten minute acoustic test results for the acoustic data to be valid. This test is necessary to detect undesired increase in the microphone and sound level meter internal self noise. As a precaution sound measuring instrumentation should be removed from any air conditioned space at least an hour before use. Nighttime measurements are often performed very near the dew point. Minor moisture condensation inside a microphone or sound level meter can increase the instrument self noise and void the data.
- 8.4 to the end: The remaining sections of ANSI S12.9 Part 3 Standard do not apply.

**ANSI S12.18-1994 (R2004) American National Standard Procedures for Outdoor Measurement of Sound Pressure Level**

This American National Standard describes procedures for the measurement of sound pressure levels in the outdoor environment, considering the effects of the ground, the effects of refraction due to wind and temperature gradients, and the effects due to turbulence. This standard is focused on measurement of sound pressure levels produced by specific sources outdoors. The measured sound pressure levels can be used to calculate sound pressure levels at other distances from the source or to extrapolate to other environmental conditions or to assess compliance with regulation. This standard describes two methods to measure sound pressure levels outdoors. METHOD No. 1: general method; outlines conditions for routine measurements. METHOD No. 2: precision method; describes strict conditions for more accurate measurements. This standard assumes the measurement of A-weighted sound pressure level or time-averaged sound pressure level or octave, 1/3-octave or narrow-band sound pressure level, but does not preclude determination of other sound descriptors.



**ANSI S1.43-1997(R2007) American National Standard Specifications for Integrating Averaging Sound Level Meters**

This Standard describes instruments for the measurement of frequency-weighted and time-average sound pressure levels. Optionally, sound exposure levels may be measured. This standard is consistent with the relevant requirements of ANSI S1.4-1983(R 1997) American National Standard Specification for Sound Level Meters, but specifies additional characteristics that are necessary to measure the time-average sound pressure level of steady, intermittent, fluctuating, and impulsive sounds.

**ANSI S1.11-2004 American National Standard 'Specification for Octave-Band and Fractional-Octave-Band Analog and Digital Filters'**

This standard provides performance requirements for analog, sampled-data, and digital implementations of bandpass filters that comprise a filter set or spectrum analyzer for acoustical measurements. It super-sedes ANSI S1.11-1986 (R1998) American National Standard Specification for Octave-Band and Fractional-Octave-Band Analog and Digital Filters, and is a counterpart to International Standard IEC 61260:1995 Electroacoustics - Octave-Band and Fractional-Octave-Band Filters. Significant changes from ANSI S1.11-1986 have been adopted in order to conform to most of the specifications of IEC 61260:1995. This standard differs from IEC 61260:1995 in three ways: (1) the test methods of IEC 61260 clauses 5 is moved to an informative annex, (2) the term 'band number,' not present in IEC 61260, is used as in ANSI S1.11-1986, (3) references to American National Standards are incorporated, and (4) minor editorial and style differences are incorporated.

**ANSI S1.40-2006 American National Standard Specifications and Verification Procedures for Sound Calibrators**

**IEC 61400-11**

Second edition 2002-12, Amendment 1 2006-05

**IEC 61400-11**

Second edition 2002-12, Amendment 1 2006-0

**Wind turbine generator systems –Part 11: Acoustic noise measurement techniques**

The purpose of this part of IEC 61400 is to provide a uniform methodology that will ensure consistency and accuracy in the measurement and analysis of acoustical emissions by wind turbine generator systems. The standard has been prepared with the anticipation that it would be applied by:

- the wind turbine manufacturer striving to meet well defined acoustic emission performance requirements and/or a possible declaration system;
- the wind turbine purchaser in specifying such performance requirements;
- the wind turbine operator who may be required to verify that stated, or required, acoustic performance specifications are met for new or refurbished units;
- the wind turbine planner or regulator who must be able to accurately and fairly define acoustical emission characteristics of a wind turbine in response to environmental regulations or permit requirements for new or modified installations.

This standard provides guidance in the measurement, analysis and reporting of complex acoustic emissions from wind turbine generator systems. The standard will benefit those parties involved in the manufacture, installation, planning and permitting, operation, utilization, and regulation of wind turbines. The measurement and analysis techniques recommended in this document should be applied by all parties to insure that continuing development and operation of wind turbines is carried out in an atmosphere of consistent and accurate communication relative to environmental concerns. This standard presents measurement and reporting procedures expected to provide accurate results that can be replicated by others.

END OF PROCEDURE