

March 4, 2016

TO: All concerned

FROM: Area-wide Concerned Residents of Huron County:
Jeanne Melady, Gerry Ryan, Patti Kellar, Carla & Mike Stachura

SUBJECT: Huron County Health Unit - Health Concerns from IWT's

On March 1, 2016, the Huron County Health Unit stated it will investigate the concerns of residents regarding potential health effects of wind turbines, in keeping with their legislative duty to investigate potential population health hazards.

- The Health Unit plans to launch an online and paper survey in May 2016.
- information from the survey will help the HCHU decide the next steps to investigate concerns.
- Health Unit staff will present their action plan to the Board of Health as part of a report in April, 2016.

The HCHU made this decision as a result of correspondence from numerous residents of Huron County to the Huron County Health Unit (HCHU) describing negative health impacts from living close to Industrial Wind Turbines (IWTs).

A delegation had been formed to make a presentation to the Huron County Board of Health on March 3, 2016. As our delegation was requesting information and the decision by HCHU to proceed with the health investigation, the HCHU scheduled two meetings on March 1, 2016.

The first meeting on March 1, 2016, the HCHU met with Carmen Krogh to further discuss the complaint tracking form that was developed with Public Health Ontario in the fall of 2015. Dr. Clark and Carmen Krogh have been working together since introduced by Safe Wind Energy for All Residents (SWEAR) in 2014.

Later the same day, the HCHU - Dr. Janice Owen (Medical Officer of Health), Dr. Erica Clark (epidemiology) and Jean-Guy Albert (environmental health) met with Jeanne Melady, Gerry Ryan, Carla and Mike Stachura.

At the meeting, the HCHU detailed their plan to implement an investigation on health complaints from Industrial Wind Turbines.

The following is a synopsis:

Phase 1 - The health unit is developing a survey to track wind turbine complaints. Carmen Krogh and Tanya Christidis (University of Waterloo) are involved in developing the survey. A small number of affected individuals (5-10) will have input into the survey development during the pilot testing phase in April 2016.

The survey will be available electronically (using FluidSurvey) and also as a paper survey. The survey is expected to be launched in May 2016. Those wanting to participate will need to register with the health unit first. The initial interview will be done by Dr. Erica Clark and/or additional health unit staff members.

Note: Information provided on this survey is owned by the individual. This means that the health unit cannot share individual responses without permission from the person who provided those responses. If a person wants to withdraw from the investigation, they have the right to ask the health unit to delete all of the information he/she provided. Only aggregate (grouped) data will be published.

Registering will involve answering an initial series of questions including age, gender, address, health conditions that existed before the IWTs were turned on, how many IWTs are visible from the house, etc. These initial questions will not be part of the wind turbine complaint tracking. After completing the survey, individuals will receive a personal code known only to them. When they enter information into the complaint tracking survey, they will use their personal code so that they do not need to enter information included in the initial interview.

When an individual is experiencing negative impacts, they complete the survey online or on paper. The survey can be accessed without the code; however, there will be a question that asks for the code. The personal code is a substitute for answering questions about name, gender, age, address, etc. every time the survey is completed.

The survey will consist of "tick" boxes and a 1-5 "Likert" scale. The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete. It will include weather conditions, noise description (i.e. whining, whooshing, wooing, thumping, crashing, whumping, swooshing, tonal sound etc.), the health complaints being experienced at that moment for example - headache, ear pain/pressure, tinnitus, nausea, anxiety, pressure in the head and chest,

bloody nose, heart palpitations, high blood pressure, vertigo, sleep disturbances including quality and quantity of sleep, shadow flicker etc.

Resident's will be encouraged to complete a survey each time they are experiencing negative health impacts. This could be up to several times a day if the weather is changing etc.

Resident's that do not have access to the internet will be provided paper forms to complete that will later be entered into the system.

Information will be gathered for each person for a year. This is necessary because negative health effects are often dependent on seasonal weather patterns.

Data will be analyzed seasonally to determine trends. The process will be open and transparent and results will be made available to the public on a seasonal basis.

The HCHU will be attempting to determine patterns of when and under what conditions people are experiencing difficulty.

Phase 2 – Analysis of the phase 1 results will help the HCHU determine the next steps of the investigation. The health unit stated next steps may include acoustical testing of both audible noise and **infrasound inside and outside** of homes of agreeable participants. The details of phase 2 are still being developed so there is no further information available on phase 2 at this time.

Dr. Owen stated that the HCHU's mandate does not include setting up a medical referral centre or designating a referral physician; however, Dr. Owen is aware that Carmen Krogh is making inquiries on that issue. **If a physician is found that is willing to take referrals, area physicians could refer people to him or her for further testing.**

Timeline:

The HCHU will require two "point people" from the "health affected resident group" to communicate with committed residents willing to participate in the development/testing phase of the survey.

HCHU expects the initial draft survey will be completed by the end of March.

HCHU will need a committed group of 5-10 people to "test" the survey beginning in April.

HCHU expects a final version of the survey to be available by May 1st and to begin a long term/full year investigation by May 1st.

Note: HCHU inquired as to the best method to find participants. Interested individuals can **contact the HCHU @ (519) 482-3416** or email @ hchu@huroncounty.ca
We also discussed press releases, news media, radio, newspaper, door to door, flyers in the affected area, various email lists, and the HCHU website.

This is the first county health unit investigation, in Ontario, regarding industrial wind turbines, where the affected resident's health complaints will be tracked long term.

Note: Dr. Owen stressed that this is NOT a research study. It is an investigation. It will not prove causality. The HCHU is required to do an investigation when there appears to be a community environmental health issue. Due to the number of complaints the HCHU is receiving from the community, they believe they must do an investigation. The Health Unit is not making a judgement on wind turbines with the survey. They are only investigating whether there is a potential population health hazard.

On March 3, 2016 Jeanne Melady and Gerry Ryan made a presentation detailing the health effects being experienced by Huron County residents. Statements of 26 households were displayed on a screen. There were over 80 people in attendance. It was standing room only. This board meeting is rarely attended by the public.

On March 3, 2016, The Huron County Board of Health voted: ***"to direct staff to prepare a report regarding the presentation by "Concerned Citizens of Huron County" about concerns of health complaints by Huron County citizens exposed to Industrial Wind Turbines"***.