



STATE OF MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

DATE: July 21, 2009

TO: Interested Persons

FROM: Burl Haar
Executive Secretary

DOCKET: E-999/CI-09-845

SUBJECT: In the Matter of the Commission Investigation into Large Wind Energy Conversion Systems Permit Conditions on Setbacks and the Minnesota Department of Health Environmental Health Division's White Paper on Public Health Impacts of Wind Turbines

RE: **Notice of Comment Period**

On May 22, 2009 the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Environmental Health Division issued the white paper *Public Health Impacts of Wind Turbines*. The white paper was prepared by the MDH in response to the Department of Commerce Office of Energy Security (OES) request to evaluate possible health effects associated with low frequency vibrations and sound, and shadow flicker arising from large wind energy conversion systems (LWECS). A link to the MDH's white paper can be found under 'Recent Documents and Resources' on the Commission's Energy Facilities Permitting webpage: www.energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us.

Please take note that the Commission is soliciting comments from interested stakeholders on the existing permit conditions used for permitting LWECS and the MDH white paper, *Public Health Impacts of Wind Turbines*. The Commission is gathering information to determine if current permit conditions on setbacks remain appropriate and reasonable. Initial comments will be accepted on or before September 16, 2009 at 4:30 p.m., reply comments will be accepted on or before October 14, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. Comments should be filed using the Commission's eDockets system at www.puc.state.mn.us.

The current permit conditions typically used in LWECS site permits issued by the Commission are provided with this notice for reference. Questions regarding this matter can be addressed to Tricia DeBleeckere at tricia.debleeckere@state.mn.us, (651) 201-2254 or to Bret Eknes at bret.eknes@state.mn.us, (651) 201-2236.

This document can be made available in alternative formats (i.e. large print or audio tape) by calling (651) 201-2202 (voice). Citizens with hearing or speech disabilities may call us through Minnesota Relay at (800) 627-3529 or by dialing 711.

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PHONE (651) 296-7124 • FAX (651) 297-7073 • TDD (651) 297-1200 • 121 7th PLACE EAST • SUITE 350 • SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA 55101-2147



**Typical Wind Turbine Permit Setback Conditions for
Large Wind Energy Conversion Systems in Minnesota**

Resource Category	General Permit Setback	Minimum Setback
Wind Access Buffer (setback from lands and/or wind rights not under permittee's control)	Wind turbine towers shall not be placed less than 5 rotor diameters (RD) from all boundaries of developer's site control area (wind and land rights) on the predominant wind axis (typically north-south access) and 3 rotor diameters (RD) on the secondary wind axis (typically east-west axis), without the approval of the permitting authority. This setback applies to all parcels for which the permittee does not control land and wind rights, including all public lands.	3 RD (763-985 ft) on east-west axis and 5 RD (1280-1640 ft) on north-south using turbines with 78-100 meter rotor diameters.
Internal Turbine Spacing	The turbine towers shall be spaced no closer than 3 rotor diameters (RD) for crosswind spacing (distance between towers) and 5 RD downwind spacing (distance between strings of towers). If required during final micro siting of the turbine towers to account for topographic conditions, up to 20 percent of the towers may be sited closer to the above spacing but the permittee shall minimize the need to site the turbine towers closer.	5 RD downwind spacing 3 RD apart for crosswind spacing
Noise Standard	Project must meet Minnesota Noise Standards, Minnesota Rules Chapter 7030, at all residential receivers (homes). Residential noise standard NAC 1, L50 50 dBA during overnight hours. Setback distances calculated on site layout and turbine for each residential receiver.	Typically 750 - 1500 ft is required to meet noise standards depending on turbine model, layout, site specific conditions.
Homes	At least 500 ft <u>and</u> sufficient distance to meet state noise standard.	500 feet + distance required to meet state noise standard.
Public Roads and Recreational Trails	The turbine towers shall be placed no closer than 250 feet from the edge of public road rights-of-way. Setbacks from state trails and other recreational trails shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.	Minimum 250 feet
Meteorological Towers	Meteorological towers shall be placed no closer than 250 feet from the edge of road rights-of-way and from the boundaries of developer's site control (wind and land rights). Setbacks from state trails and other recreational trails shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.	Minimum 250 feet

Wetlands	No turbines, towers or associated facilities shall be located in public water wetlands. However, electric collector and feeder lines may cross or be placed in public waters or public water wetlands subject to DNR, FWS, and/or USACOE permits.	No setback required pending further PUC action.
Native Prairie	Turbines and associated facilities shall not be placed in native prairie unless approved in native prairie protection plan (see native prairie standard below). Native prairie protection plan shall be submitted if native prairie is present.	No setback required.
Sand and Gravel Operations	No turbines, towers or associated facilities in active sand and gravel operations, unless negotiated with the landowner.	
Aviation (public and private airports)	No turbines, towers or associated facilities shall be located so as to create an obstruction to navigable airspace of public and private airports in Minnesota or adjacent states and/or providences.	Setbacks or other limitations determined in accordance with MNDOT Department of Aviation and Federal Aviation Administration requirements.

STATE OF MINNESOTA)
COUNTY OF RAMSEY)SS

AFFIDAVIT OF SERVICE

I, Margie DeLaHunt, being first duly sworn, deposes and says:

That on the 21st day of July, 2009 she served the attached

NOTICE OF COMMENT PERIOD.

MNPUC Docket Number: E-999/CI-09-845

XX By depositing in the United States Mail at the City of St. Paul, a true and correct copy thereof, properly enveloped with postage prepaid

XX By personal service

XX By inter-office mail

to all persons at the addresses indicated below or on the attached list:

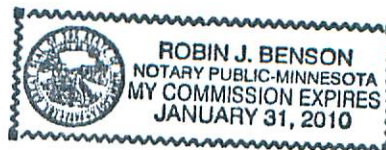
Commissioners
Carol Casebolt
Peter Brown
Marcia Johnson
Kate Kahlert
Susan Mackenzie
Bret Eknes
Tricia Debleeckere
Bob Cupit
DOC Docketing
AG - PUC
Julia Anderson - OAG
John Lindell - OAG

Margie DeLaHunt

Subscribed and sworn to before me,
a notary public, this 21 day of

July, 2009

Robin J. Benson
Notary Public



10:
MN PUC

David Thornton
MN Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road
St. Paul MN 55101

Burl W. Haar
MN Public Utilities Commission
Suite 350
121 7th Place East
St. Paul MN 55101-2147

40:
Regular Postal Mail

Christopher Clark
Xcel Energy
5th Floor
414 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis MN 55401-1993

20:
Dept. of Commerce

Christopher Anderson
Minnesota Power
30 West Superior Street
Duluth MN 55802-2093

Kenneth A. Colburn
Symbiotic Strategies, LLC
26 Winton Road
Meredith NH 03253-5413

Sharon Ferguson
MN Department Of Commerce
Suite 500
85 7th Place East
St. Paul MN 55101-2198

David L. Blair
East River Electric Power Cooperative
121 SE First Street
PO Box 227
Madison SD 57042

George Crocker
North American Water Office
P. O. Box 174
Lake Elmo MN 55042

Stacy A. Miller
MN Dept. of Commerce
State Energy Office
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul MN 55101

William A. Blazar
Minnesota Chamber Of Commerce
Suite 1500
400 Robert Street North
St. Paul MN 55101

Mark F. Dahlberg
Northwestern Wisconsin Electric Company
P.O. Box 9
104 South Pine Street
Grantsburg WI 54840-0009

30:
Inter-Office Mail

Michael J. Bradley
Moss & Barnett
4800 Wells Fargo Center
90 South Seventh Street
Minneapolis MN 55402-4129

Curt D. Dieren
L&O Power Cooperative
1302 South Union Street
PO Box 511
Rock Rapids IA 51246

Julia Anderson
MN Office Of The Attorney General
1400 BRM Tower
445 Minnesota Street
St. Paul MN 55101-2131

Mike Egg
Basin Electric Power Cooperative
1717 East Intertate Avenue
Bismarck ND 58503

Ronald M. Giteck
Office Of Attorney General
Residential Utilities Division
445 Minnesota Street, 900 BRM Tower
St. Paul MN 55101

Mark B. Bring
Otter Tail Corporation
215 South Cascade Street
PO Box 496
Fergus Falls MN 56538-0496

Kristen Eide-Tollefson
R-CURE
P O Box 130
Frontenac MN 55026

Anne Jackson
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road North
St. Paul MN 55155-4194

Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.
Suite 4000
200 South Sixth Street
Minneapolis MN 55402-1425
Attn: Chnsty Brusven

Henepin County Government Center CAO
A2000
300 S. Sixth Street
Minneapolis MN 55487
Attn: Pam Ferguson

OAG-RUD
900 BRM Tower
445 Minnesota Street
St. Paul MN 55101-2130
Attn: John Lindell

McGrann Shea Anderson Carnival
Straughn & Lamb
800 Nicollet Mall, Suite 2600
Minneapolis MN 55402-7035
Attn: Douglas Carnival

Lori Frisk-Thompson
Central Minnesota Municipal Power Agency
459 South Grove Street
Blue Earth MN 56013

Edward Garvey
32 Lawton Street
St. Paul MN 55102

Darrell Gerber
Clean Water Action Alliance of Minnesota
308 Hennepin Ave. E.
Minneapolis MN 55414

Elizabeth Goodpaster
MN Center for Environmental Advocacy
Suite 206
26 East Exchange Street
St. Paul MN 55101-1667

William Grant
Izaak Walton League, Midwest Office
1619 Dayton Avenue
Suite 202
St. Paul MN 55104-6206

Michael R. Gravelle
Avant Energy Services
Suite 300
200 South Sixth Street
Minneapolis MN 55402

Pete Grills
5414 Ashhurst Street
Indianapolis IN 46220

J. Drake Hamilton
Fresh Energy
Hamm Bldg., Suite 220
408 St. Peter Street
St. Paul MN 55102

Ronald Harper
Basin Electric Power Cooperative
1717 East Interstate Avenue
Bismarck ND 58503-0564

Ashley Houston
120 Fairway Rd
Chestnut Hill MA 02467-1850

Lori Hoyum
Minnesota Power
30 West Superior Street
Duluth MN 55802

Lawrence W. Johnston
Southern Minnesota Municipal Power
Agency
500 First Avenue Southwest
Rochester MN 55902-3303

Nancy Kelley
The Green Institute
#110
2801 21st Avenue
Minneapolis MN 55407

Mark Lindquist
The Minnesota Project
1026 North Washington Street
New Ulm MN 56073

Mary A. Martinka
Xcel Energy
7th Floor
414 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis MN 55401-1993

Dave McNary
Hennepin County DES
417 N. Fifth Street
Minneapolis MN 55401

John McWilliams
Dairyland Power Cooperative
3200 East Avenue S.
LaCrosse WI 54601

Heartland Consumers Power District
PO Box 248
203 W. Center Street
Madison SD 57042-0248

Attn: John Knofczynski

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Steve Thompson
Central Minnesota Municipal Power Agency
459 South Grove Street
Blue Earth MN 56013

Darryl Tveitbakk
Northern Municipal Power Agency
123 Second Street West
Thief River Falls MN 56701

Devon Walton
APX, Inc.
Suite 522
5201 Great America Parkway
Santa Clar CA 95054

Jeffrey C. Paulson
Jeffrey C. Paulson & Associates, Ltd.
Suite 325
7301 Ohms Lane
Edina MN 55439

Richard J. Savelkoul
Felhaber, Larson, Fenlon & Vogt, P.A.
Suite 2100
444 Cedar Street
St. Paul MN 55101-2136

Mary Beth Peranteau
Wheeler Van Sickle & Anderson SC
Suite 801
25 West Main Street
Madison WI 53703-3398

Matthew J. Schuerger P.E.
Energy Systems Consulting Services, LLC
P.O. Box 16129
St. Paul MN 55116

William Pickrell
North American Hydro
PO Box 167
116 State Street
Neshkoro WI 54941

Paul White
Project Resources Corp.
625 8th Ave. SE
Minneapolis MN 55414

Mrg Simon
Missouri River Energy Services
3724 W. Avera Drive
P.O. Box 88920
Sioux Falls SD 57109-8920

Thomas J. Zarembo
WHEELER, VAN SICKLE & ANDERSON
Suite 801
25 West Main Street
Madison WI 53703-3398

Beth H. Soholt
Wind on the Wires
Suite 203
1619 Dayton Avenue
St. Paul MN 55104-6206

MN Center for Environmental Advocacy
Suite 206
26 East Exchange Street
St. Paul MN 55101-1667

Dale Sollom
Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc.
PO Box 13200
Grand Forks ND 58208-3200

ATTN: Kevin Reuther

Trudy Richter
Minnesota Resource Recovery Assn.
477 Selby Avenue
St. Paul MN 55102

SaGonna Thompson
Xcel Energy
414 Nicollet Mall 7th Floor
Minneapolis MN 55401-1993

Senator Yvonne Prettner Solon
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol Building, Room G-9
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606

Representative Bill Hilty
559 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Representative Marty Seifert
233 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Andy Pomroy
570 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. ML King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul Minnesota 55155

Amy Wasson, Attorney
1207 Birch Hill Drive
Albert Lea, MN 56007

Carol Overland, Attorney
PO Box 176
Red Wing, MN 55066

Windustry
Lisa Daniels
2105 First Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Trimont Wind Farm - John E. Drawz
Fredrikson & Byron
4000 Pillsbury Center
200 South 6th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55402-1425

Project Resources Corporation
C/O Paul White
625 8th Avenue, SE
Minneapolis, MN 55414

Kenyon Wind, LLC
201 Ridgewood Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55403

John Ihle
PlainStates Energy
27451 S. Hwy 34
Barnesville, MN 56514

Ian Krygowski
enXco Development Corporation
10 2nd St. NE STE 107
Minneapolis, MN 55413

Comfrey Wind Energy
58307 Co Rd 17
Comfrey, MN 56019

Southwest Wind Consulting, LLC
1631 290th Avenue
Tyler, MN 56178

Iberdrola Renewables
Adam Sokolski
2829 33rd Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55406

Iberdrola Renewables
Tim Seck
1125 NW Couch STE 700
Portland, OR 97209

Xcel Energy
Brian Zelenak
414 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, MN 55401

John Daniels
Kenyon Wind, LLC
201 Ridgewood Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55403

Dan Juhl
Juhl Wind
996 190th Avenue
Woodstock, MN 56186

Jeff Wright
Morgan Wind Acquisition Group
12 S. 6th Street, STE 211
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Sibley Co. Wind Project, LLC
1631 290th Ave
Tyler, MN 56178

Northstar Transmission, LLC
Alan Blum
418 Central Ave.
Esterville, IA 51334

EcoHarmony West Wind, LLC
725 Main Ave N
Harmony, MN 55939

Lindquist and Vernum, PLLP
80 S. 8th St.
4200 IDS Center
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Grant County Wind
Edgar Persons
10343 100th Street
Kensington, MN 56343

Interstate P&L Co.
Kent Ragsdale Regulatory
200 1st Street SE
PO Box 351
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406-0351

Minnesota Power
Chris Anderson
30 W Superior Street
Duluth, MN 55802-2191

MN Rural Electric Association
Lee Sundberg
11640 73rd Ave. N.
Maple Grove, MN 55369

New Ulm PUC
Gary Gleisner
310 1st St. N.
New Ulm, MN 56073-1675

Casey Jacobson
Basin Electric Power Coop.
1717 East Interstate Ave.
Bismarck, ND 58503

Otter Tail Power Co.
Burnadette Peters
PO Box 496
215 S. Cascade Street
Fergus Falls, MN 56538-0496

Summit Wind, LLC c/o Wind Energy
Developers
Patrick Pelstring
302 1st St. E.
Canby, MN 56220-1347

MN Municipal Utilities Assoc.
Greg Oxley
3025 Harbor Ln. N. #400
Plymouth, MN 55447-5142

East River Electric Power Coop, Inc
Randy Hoffman
PO Box 227
121 SE First St.
Madison, SD 57042-0227

Great River Energy
Richard Lancaster
12300 Elm Creek Blvd
Maple Grove, MN 55369-4718

ITC Midwest
Daniel Oginsky
27175 Energy Way
Novi, MI 48375

Minnkota Power Coop, Inc.
Craig Rustad
PO Box 13200
1822 Mill Road
Grand Forks, ND 58208-3200

Missouri River Energy Services
Merlin Sawyer
PO Box 88920
Sioux Falls, SD 57109-8920

Southern MN Municipal Power Agency
Laura Sandwick
500 First Ave SW
Rochester, MN 55902-3303

Wisconsin Power and Light Co
Arshia Javaherian
4902 N. Biltmore Lane
PO Box 77007
Madison, WI 53707-1007

Dale Christensen
LD Exchange.com STE 230
2510 North Redhill Ave
Santa Ana, CA 92705-5542

David W. Niles
Avant Energy Services STE 300
200 S. 6th St.
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Ray Sand
Dairyland Power Coop.
PO BOX 817
3200 East Avenue South
LaCrosse, WI 54602-0817

Community Wind North, LLC
Wayne Hess
1631 290th Ave
Tyler MN 56178

EcoEnergy LLC
Richard Birch
211 S Paterson
suite 380
Madison WI 53703

Goodhue Wind, LLC
Jack Levi Co-Chairman
3033 Excelsior Blvd ste 525
Mpls MN 55416

Grant County Wind, LLC
Corey Juhl
996 190th Ave
Woodstock MN 56186

Half Moon Power, LLC
Michael Hastings Pres.
2018 East Thomas Avenue
Milwaukee WI 53211

Noble Flat Hill Windpark I, LLC
Mike Beckner Noble Environmental Po
8 railroad Avenue
Essex CT 06426

Sparks Energy, LLC
Anna Schmalzbauer
2751 Hennepin Ave S Ste 243
Minneapolis MN 55408

Wapsipinicon Wind Project, LLC
David M Aafedt Attorney
Winthrop & Weinstine
225 S 6th St Ste 3500
Minneapolis MN 55402-4629

wer Producer 6670

West Stevens Wind, LLC
Keith Thorstad Pres. of Mnioka
PO Box 321
Chokio MN 56221