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Part 1 of 2

The following is from “In the Shadow of Wind Farms,” that was published online and in print publications nationwide in December 2017. Permission to reproduce the following has been granted by GateHouse Media, attached.

Editor's Note: GateHouse Media interviewed dozens of families who claim that industrial wind turbines have negatively impacted their homes, health and property values. What follows are short narratives of their personal accounts, based on those interviews.

The wind industry has repeatedly disputed turbines cause health problems or reduce property value and cite several studies supporting those views.

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM

BENT TREE WIND FARM – FREEBORN COUNTY, MINNESOTA

Alliant Energy | 122 turbines

400 feet tall | 201 MW

Online 2011

Bernie and Cheryl Hagen said they suffer sleeplessness, vertigo, headaches, ear pressure and tinnitus from the 20 industrial turbines within one mile of their rural, southern Minnesota home.

When the couple first heard about plans for the Bent Tree Wind Farm, they said they asked for a one-mile setback between the turbines and their property line. They did so in part because of Bernie’s existing health problems. A Vietnam veteran, Bernie has suffered tinnitus and other disabilities related to his military service.

Bernie’s physician from the Department of Veterans Affairs attested to these problems – as well as the belief the turbines would exacerbate them – in a letter presented to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission and shared with GateHouse Media.

But the commission approved the project plans anyway.

Bent Tree’s 122 turbines started spinning on Feb. 7, 2011, and the couple said they immediately felt the effects from those closest to their home. Three of them stand less than a half-mile away.

“On Sunday the 13th, I woke up and didn’t feel very good,” Cheryl said. “It was my turn to take my mother to mass. I dropped her off at the door, I came into church and thought, ‘oh my God,

this is after my first full day and full night in the house, and I'm going to be one of those people who are susceptible to the vibrations and infrasound.”

The couple, along with several of their neighbors, has complained numerous times to the wind farm owner, Alliant Energy, and to the state Public Service Commission. They said no one will help them.

Meanwhile, they wear earplugs and noise-canceling headphones when the wind blows from the southeast – that's when they said the effects are worse. They also leave their house for days at a time to get relief.

For Cheryl, the headaches and ear pressure is unbearable. For Bernie, the tinnitus and vertigo are debilitating.

“We have had many, many nights of torture,” Cheryl said, her voice cracking with emotion. “My husband's doctor says we should just move, but it's not so easy to take your retirement savings and replace a home.”

Their home, which they purchased four decades ago on two acres of land, has become a prison instead of a sanctuary, they said. They don't want to leave, but they worry what will happen if they continue to stay.

“We're on the verge of just walking away,” Bernie said. “We're at the end of our ropes. We don't know what the heck to do. This is being shoved down our throat.”

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM

BLUE SKY GREEN FIELD WIND ENERGY CENTER – FOND DU LAC COUNTY, WISCONSIN

WE Energies | 88 turbines | 397 feet tall | 145 MW | Online 2008

Developers of the Blue Sky Green Field Wind Energy Center first approached **Bernie and Rose Petrie** a few years before construction of the 145-megawatt project.

They wanted the Petries to sign a contract allowing the company to erect one of its turbines on the couple's 65-acre land. They told the Petries the turbines were quiet and wouldn't interfere with their radio or television reception, the couple recalled.

They would even get a \$2,000 signing bonus if they signed up on the spot, Bernie said. One of the men handed the couple a contract.

“My wife put her foot down and said, ‘We are going to read this over and take it to our attorney,’” Bernie recalled. “It was so one-sided that our attorney said, ‘Don't sign it.’”

The nearly 400-foot turbines came anyway, after several of the Petries' neighbors signed contracts with the wind company. Three of the turbines stand within a half-mile of the Petries' house.

They not only interfere with television and radio reception, but they're loud and cast a flickering shadow on the couple's house every time the sun passes behind their rotating blades, they said.

"We were kind of mocked by people who said, 'Look at the money they want to pay us,'" Bernie said. "But if you would have signed the lease, they were going to have the mineral rights. You couldn't sign a contract with someone to put up a radio tower. They had total control of your property. You even had to get permission to remodel your house. If you wanted to sell your property, they had first right to buy it."

The couple doesn't suffer some of the health problems their neighbors complain about, but they said they're constantly annoyed by the noise and shadow flicker.

"I'm living on my grandfather's farm, and I have been here forever," Bernie said. "My wife is from just up the road on her father's farm. If we move somewhere, they could get put up wherever we move to. So we're just putting up with it. Plus, who is going to want to buy your land?"

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM
BLUE SKY GREEN FIELD WIND ENERGY CENTER – FOND DU LAC
COUNTY, WISCONSIN

WE Energies | 88 turbines | 397 feet tall | 145 MW | Online 2008

Larry and Carol Lamont signed a contract to host an industrial wind turbine on their 78-acre property in rural Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin, but they never got one.

At first they said they were upset the company eliminated their turbine from the project, because they were looking forward to the \$4,000 in annual income they would have received.

But after the Blue Sky Green Field Wind Energy Center started operations in 2008, the Lamonts realized they got lucky – sort of.

The turbines that company officials had promised would hum as quietly as a refrigerator actually create a cacophony of unpleasant sounds, Larry said. The couple knows this, because even though they didn't get a turbine on their property, several of their neighbors did.

And now the Lamonts are surrounded by them – one stands 1,100 feet to the north, another 1,100 feet to the west, another 1,750 feet to the south and yet another 1,850 feet to the east.

“At least we don’t have one even closer, which we would have had they put the turbine on our land,” Larry said.

But they still hear the constant noises of the nearby turbines chopping the wind. And they feel the low-frequency vibrations infiltrating their home and affecting their health, they said. Larry complained of tinnitus, high blood pressure, lethargy, and a lack of sleep. Carol suffers from a lack of sleep and vertigo.

Both noticed their symptoms disappear when they leave town.

They also noticed a change in wildlife, Bernie said. The ducks and geese that raised generations of babies on their pond for the past 30 seasons stopped coming after the turbines went up. And the four bat houses that used to host dozens of the little night fliers now stand empty, their occupants long since gone.

It’s a shame, Larry said. Everybody thought the wind farm would help the community. Instead, he said, it just made everything worse.

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM
BLUE SKY GREEN FIELD WIND ENERGY CENTER – FOND DU LAC
COUNTY, WISCONSIN
WE Energies | 88 turbines | 397 feet tall | 145 MW | Online 2008
Jim and Darlene Mueller feel trapped in a home they once loved.

For more than three decades, the couple lived peacefully on their 1.5-acre property in rural Wisconsin. There, they built their house and raised their children and cultivated some of their fondest memories.

But then the Blue Sky Green Field Wind Energy Center came in May 2008 with its 88 turbines reaching nearly 400 feet into the air.

“It has been hell ever since,” Darlene said.

The couple started feeling strange almost as soon as the turbines began operating, Darlene said. They developed migraines, nausea, confusion, memory loss, high blood pressure and ear pain so bad “it feels like our ears are bleeding,” Darlene said.

They sometimes can’t sleep for nights on end.

“I would pace the house like a lion in a cage,” Darlene said. “I would leave the house at 2 or 3 in the morning and go to Walmart just to escape the noise. You go days and days and days without sleep and it’s just madness.”

Jim and Darlene can see 68 of the project’s turbines from their house; the closest stands about a half-mile away.

The couple experiences not only low-frequency vibrations from the turbines but said the relentless buzzing and “whooping” sound of the blades slicing through wind drives them mad, they said.

Their children and grandchildren experience the same symptoms whenever they visit, Darlene said.

“There are times my grandchildren are playing outside and get headaches,” she said. “We were doing an Easter egg hunt, and my daughter-in-law had such a bad headache she had to leave. They got six miles from here, and she called me and said, ‘My headache is gone.’”

They have complained numerous times to the county, the state Public Service Commission, and the wind company, but they don’t believe it does any good.

“They all say, ‘It’s because you don’t like the way they look,’” Darlene said. “We had no problem whatsoever with the way they look, but what we were told and what has happened to us is totally different. We wouldn’t make this up.”

Even though they no longer enjoy their home, the Muellers say they can’t imagine leaving. In part, they can’t afford a new house without selling the current one – and they refuse to sell their property to another family who might experience the same pain.

“We built our house so we could retire in it,” Darlene said. “It’s not a big mansion, but it’s our home and that’s what’s so hard.”

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM
BLUE SKY GREEN FIELD WIND ENERGY CENTER – FOND DU LAC
COUNTY, WISCONSIN
WE Energies | 88 turbines | 397 feet tall | 145 MW | Online 2008
When **Lizzie Ebertz** is at home, her ears ring. Her head aches.

Wind turbines surround her home in Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin, where she’s lived all 74 years of her life. The closest is 1,000 feet away.

Nine years ago, Blue Sky Green Field Wind Energy Center's 88 turbines went online.

When the project was proposed and WE Energies started holding meetings, Ebertz said she couldn't attend. Her work hours interfered with the scheduled time of meetings and she didn't know much about wind energy at the time, so she didn't raise any concerns about the project.

But since the project has been online, Ebertz and her husband, **Leander**, have had problems with their television reception.

It took over a year before the wind company would even acknowledge their complaints.

Lizzie is a hard sleeper.

"I had my babies sleeping right next to me in my bedroom and I did not hear them" Lizzie said. "My husband had to shake me to get me awake to get me to feed my own children."

Yet, the turbines wake her up at night, she said.

Once, Lizzie suspected that there was something wrong with a nearby turbine. She jumped in bed from the noise. When she called to tell the company that something must be wrong, she said they didn't seem to believe her.

Three days later, they turned off the turbine.

Lizzie feels the worst effects in her garden, which is the lowest part of the Ebertz's property. She can't garden anymore.

"We gave up a few things. I took out three of my flower beds because i can't do them anymore, they just grew up in weeds," Lizzie said. "You can't even go out there at all."

Lizzie had dreams of developing her land when she retired. She planned on building a small camp ground. When the turbines went in, she realized that dream wouldn't come true.

But despite their problems, Lizzie and Leander can't move away, like some of their neighbors have, they said. They're retired now, and it wasn't in their budget to find a new place to live.

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM
TIMBER ROAD II WIND FARM – PAULDING COUNTY, OHIO
EDP (Energias de Portugal) | 55 turbines | 480 feet tall | 100 MW | Online
2011

BLUE CREEK WIND FARM – PAULDING AND VAN WERT COUNTIES, OHIO

Avangrid/Iberdrola | 152 turbines | 485 feet tall | 304 MW | Online 2012

Brenda DeLong used to enjoy reading on the front porch of her rural Ohio home, but now it's so noisy outside from the whoosh of industrial turbines that she has long since abandoned her favorite hobby.

Two different wind farms – Timber Road II and Blue Creek – planted a combined 207 turbines reaching nearly 50 stories tall in the corn and soybean fields around her home. Timber Road went online in 2011; Blue Creek in 2012.

DeLong can see 116 of the turbines from her house. They howl like a jet airplane taking off, she said, and one of them developed a whining noise that sounds like a siren.

“The noise is just awful,” she said. “Several times I had to leave my house because I just couldn't stand to even be there – you hear it inside and outside.”

The wind farms came with no warning, said DeLong, whose family has owned her property for generations. No one approached her to sign any documents, even though a transmission line for one of the projects runs just 2 feet from her property line.

“A neighbor and I have gone to many, many homes talking to people, and it's just amazing the people that don't like them,” she said. “In fact some of the farmers that had these turbines on their land wish they would have never signed a contract.”

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM

GOLDEN WEST WIND ENERGY CENTER – EL PASO, COLORADO

NextEra | 145 turbines | 453 feet tall | 250 MW | Online 2015

Cindy and Joe Cobb said they started feeling sick less than a week after turbines from the Golden West Wind Energy Center began churning outside their rural El Paso County, Colorado, home in the fall of 2015.

The Cobbs said they experienced nausea, dizziness and pressure headaches. Soon, they developed heart palpitations and chest pains. They couldn't sleep for several nights at a time. Then their animals started dying – first their fish, then their pet dog, then their livestock.

“We used to have aquariums and after (the turbines) started, the fish would develop a kink in their bodies,” Cindy said. “And then they would turn a pale color, go blind in both eyes, and then they would die. So we can't have aquariums in our home anymore. We've been in our home 10 years and we can't have fish anymore. It's devastating.”

Seven of the wind farm's 145 turbines stand within two miles of the Cobbs' 40-acre property and their two-story dream home. The structures, which reach 453 feet into the air, emit a low-frequency sound that the Cobbs said triggers symptoms similar to motion sickness and they believe it also affects their animals.

Acoustical engineer Robert Rand conducted a study of the Cobbs' home, as well as those of two neighbors suffering from similar symptoms, and confirmed the families' allegations.

"Blade pass frequencies observed in spectrogram analysis at homes near the vicinity of the Golden West Wind Facility fall within 0.2 to 0.85 Hz, within the range associated to motion sickness," Rand wrote.

Despite the county's ordinance prohibiting noise disturbance from acoustic pressure oscillations, such as those emitted by wind turbines, officials have done nothing about the family's complaints or about Rand's report, Cindy said.

"This is our dream to live out here and have peace and quiet, and they just destroyed it," Cindy said. "I consider this abuse."

The turbines also cause ground vibration, the Cobbs said, and it's cracking the foundation of their house. The concrete patio sunk an inch into the ground. Cracks formed in the ceilings. Wood trim around the windows buckled.

Cindy started crying. She said she doesn't know what to do. No one will help her family, she said.

"Imagine two years of not sleeping at night," she said. "I don't know why nobody cares."

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM

GOLDEN WEST WIND ENERGY CENTER – EL PASO, COLORADO

NextEra | 145 turbines | 453 feet tall | 250 MW | Online 2015

Jeff and Sandra Wolfe moved out of their home rather than endure the health problems and sleepless nights they blame on the nearby turbines of the Golden West Wind Energy Center in El Paso County, Colorado.

"You're going to let them kill you eventually," Sandra said, "or you're going to leave."

The 450-foot industrial turbines started spinning in the fall of 2015, and almost immediately Sandra said she felt sick. She said she developed migraines and tinnitus. Her ears throbbed. She kept waking up at night.

It felt worse inside the house, she said, so she started sleeping in her truck. She drove into an excavation site whose earthen walls blocked the noise and infrasound.

“I thought it was only me, but then my husband was getting sick and more and more often,” Sandra said. “And pretty soon he was sleeping in the truck with me.”

They did this throughout the fall and winter, even as temperatures dipped below freezing. It was unpleasant, Sandra said, but at least they got some sleep. They found no such relief inside their house, she said.

It wasn't just them, either.

“We discovered our animals were going blind,” Sandra said. “One day my cow tipped over from vertigo. The cows would lie down whenever the wind turbines ramped up, but when they lied down, they wouldn't eat, and when they wouldn't eat, they would get sick.”

The Wolfe's property sits within a mile of nearly one dozen of the project's 145 turbines. One of the structures stands just 1,600 feet away. The couple complained to the county and the wind company, but no one has done anything to help, Sandra said.

Then Jeff got a lucky break. His job offered to transfer him 300 miles away, so he was able to move in November 2016. But Sandra felt obligated to the family's donkeys and dairy cows. She stayed on the property for an additional nine months until she could find them a new home.

Sandra joined in husband in Delta, Colorado, in August.

“Now we face a moral dilemma,” Sandra said. “We don't know what to do about our house. We don't want to live there anymore, but we don't want to sell it to someone else who will just go through the same thing.”

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM
GOLDEN WEST WIND ENERGY CENTER – EL PASO, COLORADO
NextEra | 145 turbines | 453 feet tall | 250 MW | Online 2015
When **Rebecca and Daniel Rivas** learned about plans for a 145-turbine wind farm near their home in El Paso County, Colorado, the couple worried it might affect Daniel's health.

Daniel had a metal valve placed in his heart during a surgery a few years earlier, and they feared electromagnetic waves from the wind turbines could interfere with it and cause problems.

The couple hoped they were wrong and decided to stick it out to see what happened.

The project began operating in 2015, with several turbines about a mile and a half from the Rivas household. Almost immediately, Rebecca said, Daniel became agitated and felt his heart racing. He couldn't sleep.

“He would drive into town and stay at his brother's house almost every night for a year,” Rebecca said. “We basically lived in separate homes for a year.”

Rebecca initially refused to leave the home she and her husband built two decades ago, but eventually the turbines affected her, too, she said.

“It caused massive headaches, nosebleeds, chest pain – all kinds of stuff that caused all kinds of problems,” Rebecca said. “But what got me was my sleep deprivation.”

So the Rivas bought a second home 75 miles away. They have lived there for two years, although they still maintain their original property. They don't want to sell it, because they don't to subject another family to the same problems.

In addition to triggering health problems, the couple said, the turbines also made a “screaming banshee sound” and a “swish, swish, swish that never went away.”

And like others in the area, the Rivas noticed strange behavior in their animals. Dozens of their fowl died.

“The hens would run around and freak out,” Rebecca said. “They would literally run into the swimming pool and drown before you could get in there to get them.”

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM

SHIRLEY WIND FARM – BROWN COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Duke Energy | 8 turbines | 495 feet tall | 20 MW | Online 2010

Darrel and Sarah Cappelle abandoned their house in Brown County, Wisconsin, rather than continue to suffer the noise, shadow flicker and sleepless nights they blamed on the 495-foot turbines of the Shirley Wind Farm.

The closest of the project's eight turbines stood just 1,250 feet from the Cappelle's home, which they purchased in 2004 from Sarah's grandparents. Almost immediately after the structures started spinning, the couple said they noticed a strobe-like shadow flicker filling the house.

“If you have ever experienced it, it's not pleasant,” Darrel said. “Strobe lights are fun if you're at a party, but if you're trying to work in it or get the kids off to school, it's not pleasant. It's like the whole house is moving.”

Then Sarah developed panic attacks that seemed to hit out of the blue. She also had trouble staying asleep at night – waking up over and over and over again.

The couple’s infant son woke up frequently, too. At first the Cappelles assumed it was normal infant behavior – he was 6 months old at the time – but they noticed he stayed asleep for hours whenever they visited friends or family who lived miles away from the wind farm.

When a friend suggested the turbines might be the culprit, Darrel and Sarah decided to move out temporarily. They said they noticed a change almost immediately, especially in their then 2-year-old son.

“Within a week of leaving he was sleeping through the night,” Darrel said. “He hadn’t learned but a few words before moving out and two weeks later his vocabulary exploded. I was skeptical, but he was just 2. He couldn’t fake it.”

So instead of returning home, the family purchased a house seven miles away and put their old property on the market.

Darrel and Sarah struggled to make payments on both houses, but eventually the couple found a buyer for their old house. The deal fell through, however, when the mortgage lender denied the buyer’s application for an FHA loan due to the turbines.

“In this case we have 2 issues the noise pollution and the fact that it has been noted that wind turbines pose a human health hazard,” wrote Mario Nanna, branch manager for American Mortgage and Equity Consultants, in an email to Sarah that was shared with GateHouse Media.

“Based on these guidelines and the known issues,” Nanna continued, “my underwriting support team advised that we would not be able to lend on your property.”

Knowing they would probably never sell their house under those conditions, the Cappelles let the bank foreclose on their property.

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM

SHIRLEY WIND FARM – BROWN COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Duke Energy | 8 turbines | 495 feet tall | 20 MW | Online 2010

David and Rose Enz lived in their Brown County home for more than three decades without issue. They raised their kids there. They planned to retire there.

But six months after the Shirley Wind Farm began operations in the fall of 2010, the Enzes left their property with no intentions of returning.

Almost immediately after the wind farm's eight industrial turbines started spinning, the couple said they began feeling sick – nausea, dizziness, migraines, sleeplessness, ear aches.

“Rose started to get real ear pain to the point where she would be crying with it, and she's a tough lady,” David said. “We went away in February on trip, and after a few days we started to feel like our old selves again. We went back home, that didn't work. Went away again for several weeks, came back home again and couldn't stay.”

The couple spends most of their time in a mobile home they bought in Alabama. They return each summer to Wisconsin to visit their children, but when they do, they stay in a motor home parked several miles away from the wind farm.

The Enzes still own their home in Brown County but never stay there. They don't want to sell it, either, believing they would be subjecting some unsuspecting family to the same fate. It's not so much the audible noise – which David said is sometimes bad – it's the infrasound that sickens them, he said.

David said he wishes he had paid more attention when news of the wind farm first circulated in the community. Maybe he could have stopped it, he said.

“We were kind of like a box of rocks,” he said. “I support property rights, but I didn't realize emissions from these things would cross property lines.”

Now it's too late, he said.

“I can live with the view and the audible noise, but I can't live with a sick wife,” he said. “We were fortunate enough to be able to move out, that's not true for a lot of people.”

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM

SHIRLEY WIND FARM – BROWN COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Duke Energy | 8 turbines | 495 feet tall | 20 MW | Online 2010

Susan and Darren Ashley moved out of their house six months after the Shirley Wind Farm began operations in their rural Wisconsin community in December 2010.

The couple and their four children lived 1.3 miles from the nearest of the project's eight turbines. The structures are among the tallest in operation, stretching nearly 50 stories high.

Almost immediately after they started spinning, Darren said he began suffering from headaches, ear pain, nausea, blurred vision, anxiety, depression, heart palpitations. Susan experienced migraines, blurred vision, sleeplessness and started forgetting words, she said.

Their children also felt the effects of the turbines, especially their teenage daughter, Alyssa, who got severe headaches, ear pain and sleep deprivation. She couldn't concentrate at school. She worried her grades would slip. Alyssa spoke publicly about these problems at a rally in Wisconsin.

The Ashleys noticed that whenever they left home, their symptoms cleared up, Susan said. So the family moved into their 27-foot motor home and parked it a dozen miles away in a friend's backyard.

There they stayed for three months until deciding they needed a more permanent solution.

Then, in August 2011, Darren and Susan purchased a small house eight miles away from the turbines. The family didn't want to leave their old home – they built it themselves and had just added onto it before the turbines came – but they felt they had no choice.

“It was either chose our house or our health,” Susan said. “We chose our health.”

They're now paying two mortgages, because they refuse to sell their old house to another family who they fear will experience the same pain and suffering that they did.

Despite the health problems and financial hardship they believe the wind farm caused, Susan said they're fortunate to have escaped.

“We are blessed,” she said. “Not everyone was as fortunate.”

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM

NOTUS FALMOUTH TECHNOLOGY PARK – BARNSTABLE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS

Notus Clean Energy | 1 turbine | 396 feet tall | 1.65 MW | Online 2010

Ed and Sue Hobart said they experienced constant noise and vibration from the nearly 400-foot-tall turbine that Notus Clean Energy erected less than 1,700 feet from their house in Falmouth, Massachusetts.

They said they could hear its massive blades slicing the wind like the wings of a jet engine about to land. And they could feel the air-pressure changes each time those blades passed the pedestal like a silent pulsation that rattled their nerves.

They couldn't sleep. They couldn't find relief.

Sue couldn't take it anymore; she stayed with friends who lived far from the turbine. But Ed was stubborn. No one was going to drive him from the home they planned and designed – their dream home; their retirement home.

“It was stupid on my part,” Ed said. “It was making me sick.”

So Ed left, too. The couple sold their house at a loss, they said, and moved to a different town. There they bought a new home that's “ramshackle compared to what we had.” They felt they had no choice.

Several of their neighbors felt the same way. Ed recalled a meeting where one of the residents described to a state official how it feels to live near an industrial turbine.

“This guy said, ‘The noise and the sensations, it goes on and on and on and on and on and on,’” Hobart recalled. “And the agency guy, said, ‘Yeah, I understand.’ And the resident said, ‘No, you don't. It goes on and on and on and on and on and on – and it's not two hours; it's 24 hours, seven days a week, and you can't escape, and you're captured in this torture chamber.’”

That's how it felt for the Hobarts. That's why they thought the town of Falmouth would help them when they complained about their suffering. But they said nobody cared.

Falmouth had constructed two of its own turbines the same year, identical to the ones near the Hobart's home. Residents living near those structures also complained, with many filing lawsuits alleging the deteriorating of their health and property values.

The town fought the neighbors until, in June, a judge ordered it to shut down the two turbines.

The one near the Hobart's property, however, still turns.

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM
JERICHO RISE WIND FARM – FRANKLIN COUNTY, NEW YORK
EDP (Energias de Portugal) | 37 turbines | 494 feet tall | 78 MW | Online 2016
George and Denise Rogers bought 93 acres in rural Franklin County, New York, and built a sprawling log home with a wrap-around porch and floor-to-ceiling picture window overlooking their lush property.

Then came the Jericho Rise Wind Farm.

Now when the Rogers look out their window, they see three industrial wind turbines the size of 50-story buildings marring what once was a bucolic landscape.

The turbines howl and screech. They block the family's television reception. They emit a strange energy that makes them uncomfortable.

"It just feels like an imposing presence," Denise said. "It dominates the landscape. What once was this enjoyable nature experience turns into an intimidating presence."

Portuguese energy giant EDP constructed the 37-turbine wind farm in 2015 and 2016. The family said EDP representatives approached them to see if they would host a turbine in exchange for annual payments.

The family said no way.

Then the company wanted to offer the Rogerses a so-called Good Neighbor Agreement. If they signed it, they would get annual payments to hold the company harmless for the noise, vibrations, air turbulence, shadow flicker and other nuisances from the turbines it was going to erect on their neighbor's property, according to the agreement, which the family shared with GateHouse Media.

Again, the Rogerses said no way.

So now they suffer the effects from the turbines without compensation, they said. But they're free to complain, so the family said they have filed numerous grievances with EDP for noise violations and television interference.

The television interference really bothers them. The Rogers are huge hockey fans, and they and their sons can't watch the big games on TV anymore.

George even bought the same type of decibel meter the company uses to gauge sound from the turbines. He said the structures routinely exceed the 50-decibel limit, but whenever the company sends someone to verify the readings, they claim the turbines are within the recommended decibel range and close the case.

"It drives me crazy," George said.

The Rogers love their house and don't want to move, but Denise said she thinks about it from time to time, because she doesn't know what else to do.

"I'm pro-green energy and pro-environment," Denise said. "But the people benefiting from this are doing it at the price of their neighbors."

OCOTILLO WIND FARM – IMPERIAL COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
Pattern Energy | 112 turbines | 440 feet tall | 265 MW | Online in 2012
Wind turbines ruined everything that **Jim Pelley** liked about his home in the desert of southern California, he said.

They mar the view. They disrupt the tranquility. They chase away the wildlife.

“And when the wind is blowing, it’s just an ungodly noise that’s human torture,” he said. “We have airplanes that fly overhead, but they come and go. This is like an airplane that never lands. It’s like being at an engine testing facility.”

Pattern Energy erected 112 industrial turbines around Pelley’s home in the small community of Ocotillo six years ago. They reach 440 feet into the air. The closest ones stand about a half-mile away.

“There are 15 turbines right in front of my house that always draw my attention – it’s like 15 air puppets in front of my house,” Pelley said, referring to the tall, inflatable fabric advertisements that flap in front of car dealerships and malls.

His front porch, which he built to see the mountains and desert skies, now looks out on a forest of churning wind turbines.

“And at night, it’s red, flashing lights, like lasers pointing in every window,” he said. “At your table when you’re trying to eat, in your recliner when you’re trying to relax. It’s every day for the past five years. It just draws energy from you.”

When the company first pitched its plans to the community, Pelley thought the project would never happen. So many residents complained, he said, and the Native American community objected due to nearby burial sites.

But Pattern won approval for the wind farm anyway.

“It was ramrodded down our throats,” Pelley said. “We feel like we were bullied.”

GATHERED BY OUR TEAM
KUMEYAAY WIND FARM – SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
Infigen Energy | 25 turbines | 363 feet tall | 50 MW | Online 2005
Shortly after turbines from the Kumeyaay Wind Farm started turning near their reservation in San Diego County, California, members of the Manzanita tribe started reporting health problems.

Nearly seven in ten households complained of a cascade of symptoms including chronic sleep disorders, headaches, ear pressure, vertigo, nausea, anxiety, stomach pains and tinnitus, according to the results of a health study conducted by a local organization.

Some of them also reported cancer – notably, stomach, kidney and brain cancer.

All of them blamed the 363-foot-tall turbines for triggering their problems.

“I call these wind turbines the new smallpox blankets,” said tribal member **Rowena Elliott**, referring to the disease-infected blankets the British gave Native Americans at the Siege of Fort Pitt.

Elliott lives less than a mile from about a half-dozen of the project’s 25 turbines, which she can see from her house. Their red lights blink through her windows at night, and their blades cast a strobe-like shadow in her house in the morning, she said.

“I first noticed that I was getting affected by them in my heart,” she said, “then ringing in my ears and then my stomach hurt and just multiple symptoms. Then I would leave because they would make me sick, and then I would come back, and it would start again.”

Infigen Energy owns the 50-megawatt wind farm, which it constructed on the northern edge of the nearby Campo Indian Reservation, whose members agreed to the project.

Even though the Campo tribe approved the project, the turbines stand as close to Manzanita households as it does their own. One of the structures looms just 200 feet away from the Manzanita’s southern boundary.

Elliott said her tribe had no say on the wind farm despite its proximity. She called her members “powerless.”

“It really feels like I need to make a life decision about leaving here,” Elliott said. “When I was a little girl and grew up on this land, it was pristine and beautiful – the stars were so bright and the air was so pure. That time is gone.”