

**From:** PUC

**Sent:** Monday, April 20, 2020 5:16 PM

**To:** [gregghubner@gmail.com](mailto:gregghubner@gmail.com)

**Cc:** [ralmond@dehs.com](mailto:ralmond@dehs.com)

**Subject:** EL18-026

Mr. Hubner,

Commission Staff received a copy of your April 20, 2020 email regarding docket EL18-026. Pursuant to Condition 42 of the the permit, Prevailing Wind Park needs to submit verification of compliance with the sound level limit at your residence. At this time, it is Staff's understanding that Prevailing Wind Park is working on a plan for verifying compliance in accordance with the permit condition.

It should be noted that the 40 dBA (L10) sound level limit set for non-participating residences in Condition 27 of the permit is exclusive of all unrelated background sound. This means that an acoustical engineer needs to remove the background sound level from the total sound level (background + project) that an individual hears in order to determine the project-only sound level. In order to check the sound level for compliance, sound monitoring equipment will need to be set up to record the sound levels at your residence for at least two weeks. Once the data is collected, the acoustical engineer will then need to process the data and remove the background sound level in order to determine the project sound level at your residence. The equipment setup, monitoring, and data processing will need to be done in accordance with ANSI standards. Given the standards that need to be followed, readings on a hand-held meter or a meter on an individual's phone do not represent project-only sound.

There are a number of acoustical engineering firms that conduct sound monitoring as described above. Staff does not make a recommendation of one firm over another, and leaves it up to you to decide who you would like to hire should you want to conduct your own sound monitoring. However, the acoustical engineer should possess the knowledge and experience

to qualify as an expert and be well versed in the proper ANSI standards as described above. In addition, it should be noted that the acoustical engineer conducting sound monitoring will likely need to coordinate with the wind farm in order to obtain the data necessary for determining project-only sound levels. The Commission recently approved a test protocol in docket EL19-003 and it may be helpful for you to review that protocol in order to understand what coordination is needed with the wind farm operator in order to complete sound monitoring.

Staff expects that Prevailing Wind Park will hire a consultant to conduct any required sound monitoring. Depending on the circumstance, Staff may also hire an objective, independent consultant to oversee the sound monitoring. For example, Staff is currently using David Hessler as an independent observer for sound monitoring being completed for Crowned Ridge Wind I.

Finally, Commission Staff is willing to coordinate with you and Prevailing Wind Park to see if there is a sound monitoring program that can be implemented that will give you confidence in the results produced.

South Dakota Public Utilities Commission Staff  
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