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## BOONE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

# Officials want wind farm health data

BY ROD ROSE  
The Lebanon Reporter

**LEBANON** — The Boone County Commissioners have asked the county health department to research the alleged health issues of wind turbines.

Two developers want to build wind farms in Boone County. These plans have created both enthusiasm and opposition.

"We are seeking some direction," Rachel Whittington, Boone County Area Plan Commission Interim executive director, told the commissioners Monday. "We want to be careful what direction we want to take here."

An APC-sponsored Sept. 8 public hearing on wind farming's economic impact drew a large crowd. But, Whittington said, environmental and health issues remain. She asked that the commissioners draft a letter to the APC, explaining what actions they would like taken next.

The APC is "waiting on direction from the commissioners, to see if

they even want to continue (with public hearings) or leave things where they are," County Attorney Bob Clutter said.

Commissioner Marc Applegate recommended the health study, saying, "If there are legitimate health issues, that would swing it," in an apparent reference to whether he would back a county ordinance that allows commercial wind turbine facilities.

"I don't think we're anywhere close to looking at an ordinance," said Commissioner Jeff Wolfe.

**"It's a really emotional issue at this point with certain people."**

CHARLES EATON  
Commissioner

"It's a really emotional issue at this point with certain people," Commissioner Charles Eaton said.

Wolfe suggested the commissioners visit wind turbine facilities in White and Benton counties.

Whittington said Sharon Adams, head of the Boone County Health Department's Environmental Division, has been helping the APC research wind turbine health issues.

Finding unbiased articles assessing whether or not wind turbines

affect human health has been difficult, Adams said.

"Not very many" unbiased articles assessing whether or not wind turbines affect human health have been published. "It's hard to find something that's been peer-reviewed," Adams said.

By that, she meant unbiased data obtained through scientifically valid studies.

"I am looking for qualified speakers who've had some experience in researching the issue of the health effects of wind turbines," Adams said Monday.

She is reviewing a May 2009 report by the Minnesota Department of

Health about potential health side effects of wind turbines. The Indiana State Department of Health provided the study, which was commissioned by the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Adams said.

One wind farm opponent, Catherine Kleber, alleged in an April 2009 online story that persons living near the Ripley Wind

Farm in Ontario, Canada, suffered "ringing in the ears, dangerously elevated blood pressure, heart palpitations" and other symptoms. She offered only anecdotal evidence, however.

Those and other contentions that wind turbines are a human health hazard are groundless, wind industry backers assert.

In a report issued Sept. 23, 2008, the Canadian Wind Energy Association (CanWEA) said its review of articles and publications from European and North American sources "clearly show that there is no peer-reviewed scientific evidence indicating that wind turbines have an adverse impact on human health."

One study, published by the peer-reviewed "Canadian Acoustics," specifically rejected allegations by Dr. Nina Pierpont, M.D., that an illness she calls "wind turbine syndrome" even exists.

A July 2007 report by the University of Salford, United Kingdom, said "wind farm noise is a small-scale problem compared with other types of noise."

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MARC APPLÉGATE  
Commissioner