
*History of the Wind Turbine Energy Utility Controversy in
Howard County*

Around 2008, industrial wind turbine energy utilities (IWTE) approached landowners and area farmers with their plan of developing in this area. Private negotiations were made and lease contracts signed. The contracts included stipulations that lease holders were not allowed to discuss the IWTE with the general public in a negative manner. The development area would include Grant, Howard, Madison and Tipton counties. County officials had to be approached by the IWTE developer to insure that local zoning ordinances would accommodate their plans. In the fall of 2008 a postcard was sent to many rural residents simply stating that the ordinances were being updated to protect property values. In fact, wind energy system ordinances were formulated with input from and greatly favoring the industrial wind developers. County commissioners approved these wind ordinances in January of 2010. The general population who would live among and near these industrial wind turbines are NOT protected by the new ordinances. The allowable noise limits as well as the setbacks in the existing Howard County wind ordinance DID NOT and DO NOT follow the current health and safety recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO) or the International Standards Organization (ISO). Even so, our governing body on May 22, 2012 proceeded to enter into an Economic Development Agreement (EDA) contract with a subsidiary of the German owned industrial wind developer E•ON. County Commissioners and their attorney now admit that they feel unable to readdress basic protections for their constituency. Only after the first phase of development showed up on Howard County's southern horizon in Tipton County, did the majority of Howard County residents become aware of the approaching debacle. Every county involved in the development area has formed citizen organizations opposing further permitting. Sadly, it is too late for many Madison and Tipton county residents. The will of the people was never sought on this hugely intrusive and highly controversial industrial project now proposed for the agricultural areas of eastern Howard County. No public hearing was ever held before the county commissioners and county council members signed the EDA contract with E•ON.

To date, we have submitted to our county commissioners well over 1400 signatures opposing any type of large industrial wind development in eastern Howard County. As public complaints and deeper knowledge of the negative impact continue to grow, so does our resolve to put things right.