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REPORT

Ontario Ministry of the Environment – 2024 Environmental Complaint Records for industrial wind turbines

The records that follow were obtained by Wind Concerns Ontario, a non-profit community group coalition, via a Freedom of Information request filed in 2025. As in other years (we have complaint records from the Ministry of the Environment dating back to 2006) these records demonstrate that:

- **The Ministry's record-keeping of complaints related to wind turbines is inconsistent** even within single district offices
- It appears **not all complaints were provided** in the request fulfillment
- **The Ministry's response to complaints is inconsistent**
- In some cases (e.g., K2 Wind), **environmental officers are clearly unprepared** to deal with complex acoustic issues
- **There is a major information gap in the Ministry's record-keeping** given that the Ministry refuses to accept complaints about wind turbine noise from residents for whom the nearest wind turbine is farther than 1500 metres away. In this tranche of documents, one report was actually given an event number so is recorded, but others may be dismissed without being put in the system, and of course, no follow-up. This is information that would be collected and evaluated, if the ministry was genuinely concerned about assessing the effectiveness of regulations.

RECORD DETAILS–2024 complaints

The following information is excerpted from documents obtained via Freedom of Information request MECP FOI A-2025-00587. Where excerpts have been taken from the reports, page numbers have been provided.

Please note that the records ("Events") listed below are presented in the order *as presented in the request fulfillment*. They were provided in no particular order with regard to date, location, or complaint type.

Note that citizen complaints are made to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) in various ways: telephone call to the Spills Action Line; online filing of a complaint via the MECP website; email directly to the local District Office (this occurs for people who have filed multiple complaints and are familiar with the Environmental Officer; and by telephone calls direct to the District Office. As a result, the records provided to us, and excerpted here, are not consistent.

Also not consistent is the numbering reference system: some documents have an Event Number, Call Number or other reference, but some records label the document something else or, in a few cases, provide no reference at all. Some complaints are one of multiple complaints in which case a Master File Number may be provided. And, we saw in some cases, simply Call Report Summaries.

In a very few instances, there is reference to a "triage system" to assess the complaint, but this was not widely employed, perhaps because of the nature of wind turbine complaints relative to other complaints to the MECP, e.g., chemical spills etc.

Key incidents

Although there is much to learn from these documents, several incidents stood out for us as an indication of how complaints are managed by the MECP, which is the regulator for wind turbine noise and environmental issues in Ontario.

- One resident complained about noise and visible oil leakage on a wind turbine. The operator dismissed this as "cosmetic" and insisted there was "no oil" leaking. The MECP did a site visit on its own and determined an inspection was necessary. **There were in fact serious oil leaks** from faulty oil seals and other equipment, resulting in $140,000 of repairs.
- One noise complaint filed multiple times was **not followed up for a year**. By the time the MECP responded, staff learned the homeowner had moved.
- One family filed multiple complaints which included health impacts involving a child, and the operator response was for **company executives to visit the site**.

Neither one (the president and the company accountant) has any acoustics training or expertise, but determined that there was no noise coming from the turbines. More worrying, in correspondence with the MECP, the company noted that the complainants had opposed the wind power project from the beginning and suggested a "special sensitivity."

- The operator of a large project in receipt of multiple complaints from one family told the MECP that multiple complaints were of "no value" and **requested that the requirement for them to respond be suspended**. (we are aware of this family's history and can confirm that this has in fact happened with complaints through 2025-2026 now without response or even acknowledgement by the District Office.)

One must note that there are several situations in which the MECP responded, problems were diagnosed and solutions such as repairs done. This emphasizes the need to take seriously citizen complaints and to follow through with a meaningful response. However, more than once we see the power operators suggest that for whatever reason, response is not necessary. The Ministry is the *regulator*.

▪ **EVENT**

1-581IS, 1-585IIS, 1-581IS

District Office: Hamilton

Project: Grand Renewable. Pattern, Samsung

Date: March13, 2024; March 24, 2024

Complaint type: shadow flicker (strobe effect)

Status: Closed

Comments: Mitigation, follow-up, closed

▪ **EVENT**

1-6AL9G5, 1-6APRKC

Project: Niagara Regional Wind

District Office: Niagara

Date: April 28, 2024, follow-up Feb 13, 2025

Complaint type: Noise Assessment Score: 1

Status: Closed, no action

Comments. [p.000022] “Whooshing, grinding” noise . 5/10.

MECP: Noise could not be confirmed.

Follow-up no response from complainant. Environment Officer learned the complainant had moved.

▪ **EVENT**

1-BPQPJJ 1-3, also 1-CWP5Y9

Date: October 2, 2024

District Office: London

Project: Prowind Gunn’s Hill

Complaint type: noise

Status: ?

Comments: Operator comments that complainant was part of project opposition

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▪ **EVENT**

1-BWTPH5, 1-COOTJP, 20+ email complaints under various reference numbers 1-CWP5Y9

Date(s) October 14, November 4, December
District Office: London

Project: Prowind Gunn’s Hill

Complaint type: Noise

Health: Yes

Status:

Response: No visit. Complaint summary describes as “airplane noise”, family “can’t sleep” for this complaint, and that noise began when turbines became operational. Prowind undertook investigation which resulted in some maintenance to “leading edge” of wind turbine blades. Company to continue maintenance work. Email from MECP to Prowind December 4 addressed as “Dear Helmut” [company president]. {Ref p. 000312

▪ **EVENT**

1-4VFVK9, 1130-AQBJGR (master file reference)

Date: January 10, 2024

District Office: Windsor

Project: Brookfield/Evolugen Comber

Complaint type: noise

Health: Yes

Status: closed

Response from operator [p. 000430]: Reference to physical nature of complaint "ears once again screaming", "nauseated, off balance". [p.000437] Site visit January 11: no high pitch frequency noted, "turbine functioning within normal operation." Complaint brought forward in 2017, monthly complaints, "we have met our reporting obligations in response to each concern."

As per letter June, 2023 from Brookfield/Evolugen, "we conducted a study as a subsequent measure to address this matter. Even after applying the most conservative of sound levels, the measured *infrasound levels were found to be below the threshold of perception for the average listener*[1]…. We are of the opinion that the turbine is not the root cause of this concern. … Upon thoughtful deliberation, we believe monthly notifications pertaining to this specific complaint are not providing any substantial value. Therefore, we kindly request a discussion with your to determine the optimal approach to resolve this ongoing concerns and your consideration in *suspending the reporting requirement* linked to this complaint." [p. 000438]

▪ **EVENT**

1-4VFOW

District Office: Windsor

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[1] The definition of "infrasound": "i*nfrasound refers to sound waves with frequencies below 20 Hz, which are too low-pitched for human hearing but significant in scientific and practical contexts."* Source: Modern Physics. Infrasound | Low-Frequency, Science & Detection

Project: Brookfield/Evolugen Comber

Date: March 11, 2024

Complaint type: Noise

Health: Yes

Status: Closed

Comments: “Extreme distress”. “Destroyed life in our home.” “Growing list of health complaints.” Taking lawyer’s advice, reporting monthly, instead of daily. [p. 000443]

▪ **EVENT**

1-6MFN8L, 1-6M8ST4, 6MFN8L

Date: July 2, 2024

Project: Grand Renewable

District Office: Hamilton

Complaint type: shadow flicker

Status: Closed

Mitigation

▪ **EVENT**

1-6M8ST4

Date: May 9, 2024

Project: Grand Renewable

District Office: Hamilton

Complaint type: shadow flicker

▪ **EVENT**

1-74BJMB, I-7403CW

Date: May 12, 2024

Project: Grand Valley Wind Phase 3

District Office: Guelph

Complaint type: Noise

Health: N/A

Status: Closed

Comments: Noise “like a lawnmower”.

Operator: due for servicing [p.000057]

Field visit, 3 turbines, servicing done, no further complaints

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▪ **EVENT**

1-E5VRQI, 1-E9EKH5 (1,2, 3)

Date: February 4, 2024

Project: Gunn’s Hill, Prowind

District Office: London

Complaint type: Noise.

Health: Yes

Comments: “No sleep”. Noise like jet airplane.

Operator response: Site visit: complainant should be “technically unable” to hear turbine noise. [p.000062] Servicing work to be done “in spring”

▪ **EVENT**

1-CWP5Y9

Date: Nov. 4, 2024

Project: Gunn’s Hill, Prowind

District Office: London

Complaint type: Noise

Comments: Desktop response, compliance review underway [p. 00064]

▪ **EVENT**

1-ETDNCE , also 1, 2,3,4

Date: December 15, 2024

Project/Operator: Gunn's Hill, Prowind

Complaint type: Noise

Health: N/A

Status: Merged

Comment:

From Operator: "I am sorry that this concern causes you and us so much extra work…have not received any response [from complainant]"

▪ **EVENT**

1-EVWDBLL, 1-4

Date: December 17, 202

Project: Gunn's Hill, Prowind

District Office: London

Complaint type: Noise

Health: N/A

Comments: Sleep disturbance. [p.000072]

▪ **EVENT**

1-BGESS4, 1-BHHP6L

Date: September 29- October 4, 2024

Project: Gunn's Hill, Prowind

Complaint type: Noise

Health: Yes. (Child)

Comments: Sleep disturbance (child). "Constant until the wind stops."

Response: Company president talked with adjacent landowners—no difference in sound noted. "Special sensitivity" [p.000196] "The sensitivity to the turbine noise may be related to [redacted text]."[p.000197] Continue to engage with complainant. [note: p. 000330 complainant says company has "not acknowledged a problem]

Instructed team to look for any irregularities during routine fall maintenance. [p. 000197]

President and company comptroller visited and conducted an interview, while auditing the sound. [2] No noise observed [sic].at the time. Complainant asked to describe noise: at night, like airplane overhead, flying low. [p.000203] Complainant was asked why complaints not filed prior to this time, responded they did not know they could.[p.000299]

Repair photos supplied pp. 000215-219

[2] As names were provided, Wind Concerns Ontario looked up the individuals named: president Helmut Schneider, a management consultant and Prowind president; Carr Villabroza, company comptroller. Neither has preparation or qualifications in acoustics. [p.000199, 000202]

▪ **EVENT**

1-4VFVQO, 1-4

Date: March 11, 2024

Project: Brookfield Comber

District Office: London

Comments: Brookfield/Evolugen files email to report it sent acoustic results for 2023, not 2024.

NOTE RE: MASTER FILE 1130-AQBJGR

Letter from Evolugen to MECP January 12, 2024

"We deeply empathize with the concern raised and consistently demonstrated our commitment to resolving the complaint that was initially brought forward in 2017. We received monthly concerns since August 2020, and have met our reporting obligations in response to each concern....we believe the monthly notifications pertaining to this specific complaint are not providing any significant value. Therefore we kindly request a discussion with you to determine the optimal approach to resolving this continuing concern and your consideration in suspending this reporting requirement."

▪ **EVENT**

1-14FKWO

Date: March 18, 2026

Project/operator: Brookfield Comber

District Office: Windsor

▪ **EVENT**

1-69INCN, 1-69INC6, 1-6

Date: April 26, 2026

Project Operator: Talbot

Complaint type: Noise

Health: Yes

Status: Estimated turbine 1500m+, file closed NO ACTION [p.000469]

Comments: 2 nights, one day, “pulsing roar”, nosebleeds, disturbed sleep, headache

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▪ **EVENT**

1-6C02CA, 1-6AL9P5

Date: March 29, 2026

Project/Operator: Romney, EDF

District Office: Windsor

Complaint type: noise

Health: N/A

Status: Action

Comments: Like airplane running.

Company began action plan, discovered gearbox failure. Repair to avoid recurrence [p. 000472, 000541]

Note resident question about setback, whether it is correct.

Several complaints previous, Environmental Officer notes “slipped through the cracks”.

▪ **EVENT**

1-HTO2WY [Master 1130-AQBJGR]

Date: February, March, June 2024

Propject/Operator: Brookfield/Evolugen Comber

District Office: Windsor

Complaint type: noise

Health: Yes

Status: Closed

Comments: “On our doctors advise [sic] we continue to report” [p.000583]

“This torture” [p.000555]

Continuing complaint.

Evolugen operator requests suspension of reporting requirement for this complainant [p.000553]

▪ **EVENT**

1130-AQBJGR [Master file]

Date: August 19

Project/Operator: Brookfield Comber

Complaint type: noise

Health: Yes

Status:

Comments: [p.000584] “Unbearable noise.” MECP “Advised us to move.” “Ears screaming.” “What could we gain from noise complaints?” “Torture trying to remain in our home. [p.000586]

“Clear our govt prefers to protect wind industry over health effects we have.”

“No one should be suffering trying to remain in their home.”

▪ **EVENT**

1-944HC4, 1-945LQ4

Date: July 15-19, 2024

Project/Operator: Brookfield Comber

District Office: Windsor

Status: Closed August 19

Health: N/A

Comments: scheduled repair, 4 days, replace faulty part. “Worn out rod on pitch cylinders”

▪ **EVENT**

1-HTNG9I

Date: August 19, 2026

Project/Operator: Brookfield Comber

Complaint type: noise

Health: Yes

Status: N/A

Comments: Appears to be repeat of February complaint?

Evolugen summary [pp 000620-626]

“Affects our eardrums.” “Not a noise we hear.” [p.000611]

▪ **EVENT**

1-DQVB6N

Date: Nov. 22, 2024

Project/Operator: Harrow, Engie

District Office: Windsor

Complaint type : Noise, environmental spill, oil on turbine blades, tower

Status :

Comments: MPP letter initiated complaint process

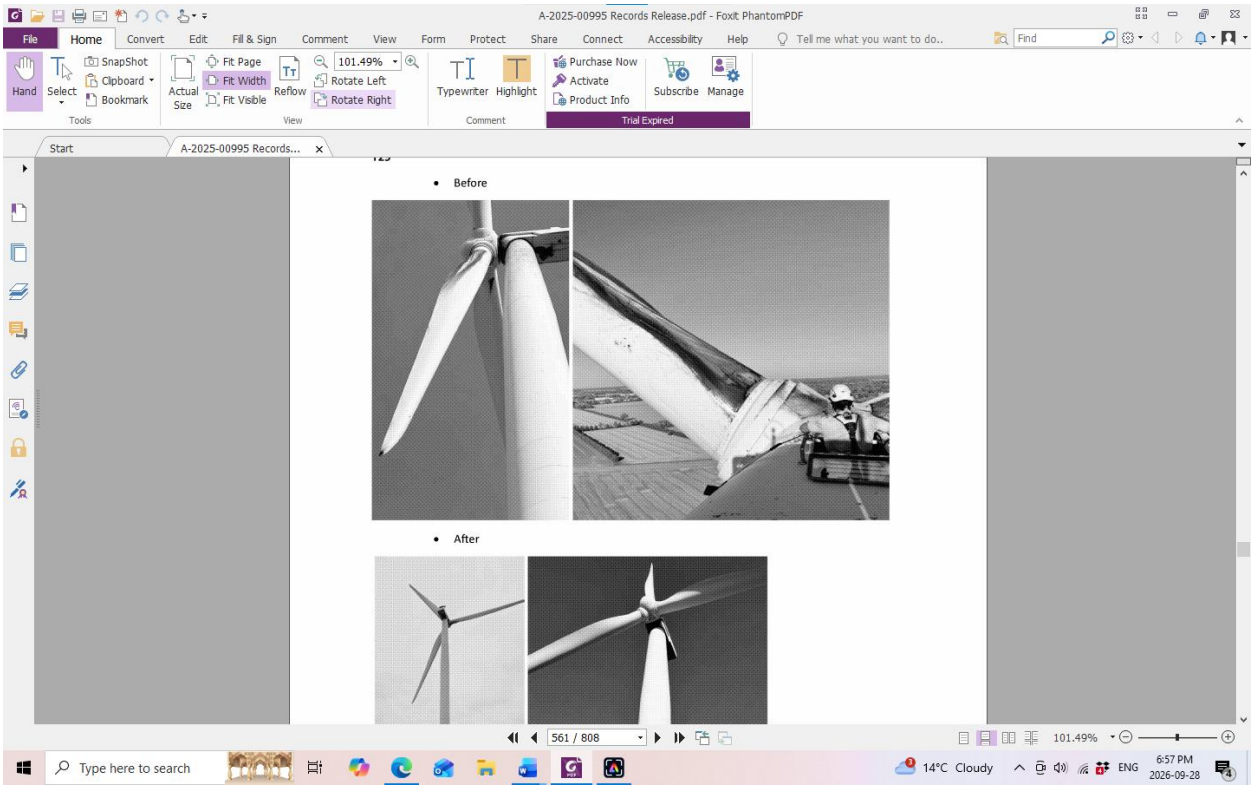
Site visits: Operator November 28, MECP December 11

Company response: “cosmetic issue” No abnormal noises. “I can assure you no oil is pouring out.” [p.000636]

MECP visit: oil streaks noted.

Vesta visit: Hydraulic oil leaks from test ports and pitch seals. Repair cost $142,221.00

Photos [p.000652]



■ **EVENT**

1-HTNGQF

Project/Operator: Brookfield Comber

Complaint type: Noise

Status: closed

Comment: Continuation of earlier file

■ **EVENT**

1-4LYX8M

Date: January 23,2024

Project/Operator: Nation Rise, EDPR

District Office: Cornwall

Complaint type: wildlife, dead bats

Status: Closed

Comments: [p.000684]

Report 10.6 bats killed per turbine. Complainant: should this trigger mitigation. [p. 000686]

Operator: No exceedance in 2023. Initiates mitigation in certain conditions. [p. 000684]

10 “subset turbines” [i.e., not all 27]

▪ **EVENT**

1-4MMJYU-2 (must be more here, not provided), 1-4LTIHU, 1-4LT1HU, 1-H0ZIBQ

Date: February, November

Project/Operator: Underwood Enbridge

Complaint type: noise

District Office: Owen Sound

Status: Closed

Health: N/A

Comments: Loud swooshing daily.

Operator instituted voluntary curtailment for 2 turbines. At night when wind above 7 m/s. No further complaints.

▪ **EVENT**

1-4NEZKL, 1-4NFNML

Date: June, August 10-11, 2024

Project/Operator: K2 Wind, Axium Infrastructure

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Noise

Health: Yes

Status: Closed

Comments: 2:49 a.m. noise. “Feel terrible from disturbed sleep”, “pressure”,”physical and emotional toll on our health”

3:30 a.m. “metal on metal sound”, 3 days, headache

August: “changing definitions of tonality”

▪ **EVENT**

1-7TEO8Y

Date: June 5, June 19, 2024

Project/Operator: K2 Wind, Axium

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Noise

Health: Yes.

Status

Comments: 4 years, “adverse effect”, “crashing and whomping” noise, please determine cause [p.000815]

▪ **EVENT**

1-4NWWILG, 1-4NFML -12, -13, -16 [others not provided]

Date: February 2024

Project/Operator: K2 Wind

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Noise

Health: N/A

Status: MECP visit.

Comments: Notes: August 27, July 11 and 4, June 20, August 9

▪ **EVENT**

1-4QI92W

Date: Feb. 29, 2024

Project/Operator: K2, Pattern

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Shadow flicker

Status: ?

▪ **EVENT**

1-6IERWO

Date: May, 2024

Project/Operator: K2

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Shadow flicker

▪ **EVENT**

1-CB4SJ, 1-4QII99XI- 1-9, 1-9NTSAT

Date: February 2024

Project/Operator: K2

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Shadow flicker

Health: N/A

Status:

Comments: Pattern Energy via remote in Houston. March 1. No detectable flicker, will use predictor.

Complainant in Feb: operator said would turn it off, has not.

▪ **EVENT**

1-ARXK79

Date:September 13

Project/ Operator: Unifor

Complaint type: Noise

Health: N/A

Status: Closed

Comments: Noise “like an airplane”.

Unifor: turbine operating normally

▪ **EVENT**

1-AB9KG2

Date: August 22, 2024

Project/Operator: Underwood Enbridge

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Noise

Health: N/A

Status:

Comments: noise occurs daily.

Operator: operating normally, no operational issues. No action, August 27.

▪ **EVENT**

1-F4MED

Date: September 13-October 3, 2024

Project Operator: Unifor

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: noise

Health: N/A

Status: No action

Comments: “Sounds like airplane overhead”

▪ **EVENT**

1-BHAHZY

Date: September 28, 2024

Project/Operator: Unifor

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Noise

Health: N/A

Status: closed

▪ **EVENT**

1-BHA109, 1-BHA1Z1- 1 [possible others not provided]

Date: October 1, 2028

Project/Operator: Unifor

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Noise

Health N/A

Status:

Comments: 10/10, wind intensity

▪**EVENT**

1-BNJR9P, BKNW56, 1-BMJRPC- 1-2

Date: September 27, October 2-3, 2024

Project/Operator: Unifor

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Noise

Health: N/A

Status:

Comments: “very loud”

▪ **EVENT**

1-4NFNML (Master file) plus 2 other reports

Date: February 21, 2024

Project/Operator: K2 Wind, Pattern

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: shadow slicker

Health: N/A

Status

▪ **EVENT**

1-4QI99X

Date: February 29, 2024

Project/Operator: K2 Wind

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Shadow flicker

Health: N/A

Status

▪ **EVENT**

1-4NFNML (master), 1-9V2PQO [multiple]

Date: May 23, June 16, August 9, August 102024

Project/Operator: K2 Wind

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Noise

Health: Yes

Status

Comments: Continuing complaint

[p. 000866] Thumping and churning, “sickening”

[p. 000872]adverse effect demands action under EPA

Response has changing definition of tonality “turbines are screeching” [p. 000877]

▪ **EVENT**

1-4QI88X

Date: May 24, 2024

Project/Operator: K2 Wind

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Shadow flicker

Health: N/A

Status: N/A

▪ **EVENT**

Date: August 27, 2024

Project/Operator: East Durham

District Office:

Complaint type: Noise

Health: N/A

Status:

Comments: Multiple emails between MECP and project operator.... MECP environmental officer says this type of complaint is “complex” [p.000913]

▪**EVENT**

1-HOZIBQ, 1-4LT1HU (master)

Date: August 23, August 26, 2024

Project/Operator: Underwood Enbridge

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Noise

Health:

Status

Comments: Loud swooshing. 20-20 complaints logged. [p.000928]

MECP Environmental Officer on role: [p.000928]: complex

▪ **EVENT**

1-4QI99X

Date: February 29, 2024

Project/Operator: K2 Wind

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Shadow flicker

Health: N/A

Status

Comments:

▪ **EVENT**

1-ARXK79

Project/Operator: Unifor

District Office: Owen Sound

Complaint type: Water?

Health:

Status:

Comments

Source: Request under Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Ontario A02025-0095

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Wind Concerns Ontario is a coalition of community groups and individuals concerned about the impact of industrial wind turbines on the health of Ontario residents on the environment, and our economy.

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