

# The easy way out (so damn your rights)

**Why has AIM Powergen withdrawn its application to build industrial wind turbines in Grey Highlands?** For the same reason so many other wind developers are doing likewise. Because they can't satisfy the criteria set by local planning authorities – standards aimed at protecting your rights, property, health and environment.

**Our municipal planning process exists to protect all residents.** That democratic right is now gone under the Green Energy Act, along with other safeguards previously enshrined in The Environment Protection Act, The Planning Act, The Niagara Escarpment Act, the Province's own 2005 Planning Policy Statement and other legislation put in place when government actually put people before big business and the politics of appearing to be green.

**AIM was asked by our municipality to respond to concerns** about stray voltage, ice throw, shadow flicker and infra-sound – issues that put your health and safety at risk. They were asked to provide specific details on the siting of these 400 ft. turbines, their impact on wells, ground water, birds and bats, and a detailed Management Plan that would explain how damages to local roads would be repaired and emergency services provided during construction. Their response amounts to, **'Nah, that's too hard ... we'll just take the easy way out with the province.'**

**The Green Energy Act was designed to make it easy for wind developers** to bypass the protections of the municipal planning process and the involvement of concerned taxpayers. Indeed, the Ministry of the Environment told AIM to withdraw its application. Now consider this Ministry's record of protecting our environment: of 31 requests for a full-scale environmental assessment of wind projects across the Province, NONE have been allowed by the Ministry.

**The reason you ask?** *The London Free Press* says these elevation requests are "assessed by proponents and not independent environmental experts." The Ministry says the projects "are not unique" and "we already know what the environmental impacts will be." Further, "there have been so many that we can't look at each project separately."

**So much for due process and your rights.** While our municipal council took the time to ensure a rigorous examination of AIM's application to visually pollute our scenic vistas and threaten human and animal health, the Province does not have the resources, standards or inclination to do likewise. Just as industry information sessions are a complete sham, so too the Liberal's new approval process.

**Premier McGuinty says "we care about health"** but what's he done about it? Ministers like Smitherman and Gerretson refuse requests to respond to people's concerns about wind turbines but show up at every ribbon-cutting ceremony and industry event. Streamlining the process for wind project approvals is more about eliminating your right to due process or having your concerns heard and acknowledged.

**If this concerns you,** speak your mind to your elected officials – to find out how to reach them, go to <http://www.gwag.ca/pages/help.html>. Don't let your rights be trampled. Lend your voice to those who are saying "Enough! – follow the rules that were put in place to protect our health and welfare."

**A public service message paid for by citizens who  
seek to preserve the quality of living in Grey Highlands.  
People who actually live here and who care about this community.**