

FACT SHEET: WIND ENERGY AND PROPERTY VALUES



Wind energy continues to create new economic prospects in rural areas. However, this new development can come with concerns from local communities and landowners. Often mentioned is the possible effect on nearby property values. While there are many anecdotes about potential effects, there are several studies examining property values near wind farms. This fact sheet outlines considerations, findings, and recommendations drawn from those studies.

CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ A key feature of many wind energy ordinances is turbine setback distances from homes and other properties. Because these distances vary by county, there are questions about the effect on property values.
- ▶ There may be different results based on the development time frame – the announcement of a wind farm, for example, could have some effect, while impact on property values may dissipate with a completed wind farm.
- ▶ Housing and land markets may change year to year, meaning any particular single year is likely not enough to gauge whether there is a clear effect on property values from nearby wind farms.
- ▶ Other factors like “disamenities” may affect property values. These can be related to wind farms, in the case of access roads to service turbines or substations, although there are more common disamenities such as concentrated animal feeding operations, wastewater treatment plants, landfills, and heavily developed areas.





FINDINGS

A recent study found no evidence of an effect on home prices in proximity to wind turbines.

The 2013 study, conducted by the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, used data collected from the sale of more than **50,000 homes** in **27 counties**, located in **nine different states**.¹

The homes were within 10 miles of wind projects, with **1,198 sales within one mile**, and **331 within half of a mile**. This study also used data from before the announcement of a project; the post-announcement, pre-construction period; and the eventual operation of the project.

Results were affirmed by similar studies done by the University of Rhode Island and the University of Connecticut in conjunction with the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.^{2 3}

RECOMMENDATIONS

While wind farms appear to have no notable effect on property values, siting remains an important piece of wind energy development. Counties and local communities must identify ways to address concerns and mitigate impacts from new development, while allowing landowners to host wind turbines if they choose to.

Recommendations include:

- Host public meetings at the county or community level to discuss local concerns and to present information such as the findings cited in this fact sheet.
- Use informed feedback when creating new ordinances or making changes to current wind energy ordinances.
- Developers should meet with host landowners and neighbors to determine how to avoid unnecessary impacts to subjective value of property these studies may not capture.
- When possible, developers should attempt to avoid additional disamenities. For example, if existing access to an area is present, and can be used as a service road, a developer should avoid creating a new access road.
- Address post-construction damages that may have occurred to a property to avoid potential property value loss. Developers and landowners should have a clear process for dealing with any damages that have occurred.
- Counties should look for opportunities to work with developers to improve local amenities. In some cases, project developers will make improvements to roads in an area during the construction phase, leaving the county with better roads after a project is completed.

1 Hoen, Ben, Jason P. Brown, Thomas Jackson, Ryan Wiser, Mark Thayer, and Peter Cappers. "A Spatial Hedonic Analysis of the Effects of Wind Energy Facilities on Surrounding Property Values in the United States." Ernest Orlando Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Environmental Energy Technologies Division, August 2013, emp.lbl.gov/sites/all/files/lbnl-6362e.pdf. Accessed May 2018.

2 Lang, Corey and James Opaluch. "Effects of Wind Turbines on Property Values in Rhode Island." University of Rhode Island, Environmental and Natural Resource Economics, Oct. 18, 2013, energy.ri.gov/documents/Onshore%20Wind/Final%20Property%20Values%20Report.pdf. Accessed May 2018.

3 Atkinson-Palombo, Carol and Ben Hoen. "Relationship Between Wind Turbines and Residential Property Values in Massachusetts." University of Connecticut, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Jan. 9, 2014, files.masscec.com/research/RelationshipWindTurbinesandResidentialPropertyValuesinMassachusetts.pdf. Accessed May 2018.

