



Ont. couple goes to court over wind farm health concerns



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TORONTO — A southwestern Ontario couple whose family farm sits in a proposed wind farm say they are being blocked in their efforts to determine if the turbines cause any adverse health effects.

Shawn and Tricia Drennan's farm north of Goderich sits in the proposed Kingsbridge II wind farm and one turbine will be about 650 metres from their house.

Shawn Drennan says they heard some people living near an earlier wind farm project sold their properties to the wind farm operator after suffering health problems.

But the Drennans say they couldn't talk to those people because they were banned from discussing health issues by a non-disclosure clause in their sale agreements.

The Drennans have taken their case to the Superior Court of Justice in an effort to have the gag orders lifted so that they can determine if their health will be adversely affected by the turbines.

Their lawyer Julian Falconer says some jurisdictions, such as Florida, ban the use of non-disclosure agreements when health or safety is concerned.

Ontario's panel that rules on turbine approvals has ruled that there are "legitimate concerns and uncertainties about the effects of wind turbines on human health," but noted there is a lack of peer-reviewed science on both sides of the debate.

"This is an extraordinarily bizarre set of events which this government (Ontario) has set in motion," Falconer said Tuesday.

"Rather than creating very clear, credible research before subjecting the Drennans to this type of nightmare, they would opt instead ... to subject them to it to see how it turns out," he said.

Shawn Drennan said his family has lived on the farm for nearly 90 years and they don't want to leave their community.

"We're concerned for our family, our livestock, our farm, but also for our community," Drennan said. "My grandfather bought the farm we're living on ... in 1922."

Drennan said all they want to be able to do is talk to the people they believe have been affected by wind turbines.

"We need to talk to them to get medical evidence that we can utilize to protect ourselves," he said.

Falconer said the case could be heard as early as November.