Health concerns over impact of wind farms

A health expert has called for a 10km exclusion zone between homes and new UK wind farms.
The “setback” `one plea is based on fears over the impact on health.
The call comes from Dr Sarah Laurie, medical director of the Waubra Foundation, an Australian body dedicated to researching the health effects of wind turbines close to human habitation.
She argues that the problems caused by prolonged exposure to noise and vibrations of the turbines are “real, serious and at times life-threatening”.
The Sunday Post has spoken to Scots families who live near wind farm sites who claim their health has been damaged by conditions including insomnia and stress.
Dr Laurie has advocated the precautionary setback zone in Australia following a recent Senate Committee recommendation into n independent study of the health effect of wind turbines.
But now the former GP says that until similar detailed research is conducted in the UK he 10km zones should be rolled out here too.
“I HAVE NO DOUBT MANY PEOPLE HAVE SUFFERED SERIOUS ADVERSE EFFECTS”
She revealed she knows of Australians affected by windfarms who have had a number of potentially life-threatening illnesses.
They include a condition caused by an adrenalin surge and leading to symptoms including severe headache and dangerously high blood pressure.
Dr Laurie explained: “There’s an urgent need for research at existing wind developments to determine what the “dose” of noise and vibration is that these people are exposed to and what their symptoms are before more turbines are built closer than 10km to homes.”
In Scotland there is currently a 2km guide for separation distance between windfarms and the edge of towns, cities and villages. However, this is not a requirement and it is up to planning authorities to make a judgment.
Dr Laurie said: “Until local data is collected, I would certainly advocate this (10km) setback as a minimum.”
Dr Chris Hanning a retired consultant in Sleep Medicine, said Dr Laurie’s requirement for 10km would “certainly prevent any harm while further investigations are being carried out.”
He added: “The health impacts of wind farms are serious. I have no doubt that many people have suffered serious adverse effects.
“The Japanese government has implemented a four-year programme of research into the health effects of wind turbine noise.
“Pressure should be placed on the UK Governments to do likewise, and in the meantime enact a moratorium on on-shore windfarm construction.”
Struan Stevenson MEP said” “The constant noise, vibration and flicker-effect have caused extreme stress, nausea, migraine and panic attacks in people living within a 10km zone.”
“I am convinced that having a 10km zone is correct.”
A spokesman for Scottish Renewables said “All windfarms in Scotland have to comply with strict guidance on noise.

“We are aware of no peer-rev000iewed research showing any impact on health from wind turbines in the UK.”
A spokeswoman for The Scottish Government said: “There is no evidence of health effects arising from windfarms and Dr Laurie’s examples relate to other countries.
“Applications that do not meet strict criteria are rejected. Our planning guidance for local authorities makes it clear that developments must be carefully sited to mitigate and minimize impacts on the environment or local amenity.”

LACK OF SLEEP IS MAKING LIVES A MISERY

Two families in a Scottish Glen say their health is being affected by a nearby windfarm.
Residents living in what was once dubbed the “secret valley” – previously unspoiled countryside three miles inland from Girvan – say the pounding of the Hadyard Hill wind farm is making it impossible to get a decent sleep.
And during waking hours bleary eyed locals are being subjected to “shadow flicker” – a “disturbing” intermittent shadow cast over their homes when the sun is behind the rotating blades of 52 turbines.
Full-time foster carer Robert Baldwin, who lives in a cottage just over 1km from the site explained: “We don’t know what health effects this noise is having on people.
“If 10km is proven to be the safe distance, that should be the distance they build from.”
Mr Baldwin, who has a 34-year-old disabled son, added: “When the blades are spinning the noise tunes itself into your heartbeat and it’s a thump, thump, thump.
“we feel constantly tired because we’re just not getting proper rest.”
Retired civil servant Kay Siddell who lives nearby with her husband John, believes her health has been compromised by the wind-farm.
“I have autoimmune problems. I think there’s a link between stress and my health problems and living in the circumstances that we do is stress inducing.”