

Wind Energy Development Best Practices for Community Engagement and Public Consultation

December 2012



canwea

CANADIAN WIND
ENERGY ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
DE L'ÉNERGIE ÉOLIENNE

Outline

- Situational Context
- Best Practices and Public Consultation
- Developing the Guidelines
- Using the Guide
- Pillars of the Guide
- Committed to Review
- Roll-out
- Training Sessions



Situational Context

- Wind energy is relatively new in the Canadian context and an important part of Canada's energy future: All eyes are on us!
 - There is a strong need for **factual** information
 - With growth and success comes responsibility
- Social acceptability is key to developing successful projects



CanWEA's mission is to promote the responsible and sustainable growth of wind energy in Canada



Best Practices and Public Consultation

- Introducing the *Best Practices for Community Engagement and Public Consultation* is a crucial step in CanWEA's continued efforts to improve and strengthen industry practices as wind energy grows across Canada
- The **amount** and **quality** of local consultation and communications can have a pivotal impact on the success of a project
- **Goal:** Every CanWEA member has the knowledge and skills to help ensure their wind energy development is a welcomed addition to the community



Developing the Guidelines

- Initial actions
 - “Focus group” session at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities’ Sustainable Communities Conference (February 2010)
 - Feedback from municipal leaders at other events and one-on-one meetings (AMO, August 2010)
- The development of the Best Practice guidelines was directed by a steering committee of CanWEA member volunteers
- Input was gathered from a wide range of experts in communications and public consultation
- Scan of existing industry best practices – wireless telecommunications, etc.



Using the Guide

- The guide has been created for CanWEA members who have a direct role to play in planning and developing wind energy projects in Canada

The guide is not intended as a substitute for specific and expert advice

Encourage developers to meet and when possible exceed provincial regulations

- CanWEA recognizes the right of citizens to have a meaningful role in developments that affect their community
 - Ensuring this right means providing information to make public consultation more effective



Pillars of the Guide

- The guide outlines a wide range of general principals and practices
 - Providing step-by-step instructions to help plan and manage community engagement activities through project lifespan
- Each of the nine sections is designed to provide the knowledge and tools to plan and implement a successful community engagement program



Pillars of the Guide

Understanding the Community

- It is important to recognize the unique characteristic of each community and make efforts to demonstrate your knowledge and respect

Establishing and Earning Community Support

- Establish contact with key community stakeholders in the early stages of planning to build public support for your project
- Take responsibility for your actions and demonstrate commitment to a long term and productive presence in the community - **“earn your citizenship”**



Pillars of the Guide

Consult – /ken'sAlt/ verb. To seek information or advice from (person, book etc.): take counsel (with); take into consideration (feelings etc.)

-The Oxford Dictionary of Current English

Public Consultation

- In most provinces public consultation is a regulatory requirement
- Community engagement activities should be guided by three key elements

Opportunity

Provide realistic opportunities to attend all meetings – it is the proponents responsibility to inform the community and not the community's responsibility to learn about the project

Information

Accurate, current and accessible to all stakeholders (consistent messaging)

Response

Responsiveness – set timely standards for speed and amount of detail



Pillars of the Guide

Communicating with the Media

- Strategic media relations can help build your company's reputation as a trusted and responsible environmental steward and help you become a welcomed new part of the community

Presentation Skills

- This section is designed to help you implement a successful presentation in order to effectively manage meeting dynamics and diffuse emotional situations



Pillars of the Guide

Addressing Opposition Effectively and Respectfully

- Change is often controversial and even the best planned wind energy projects will likely meet with some level of opposition
 - Understand specific concerns
 - Education is the most powerful tool for addressing opposition
 - At all times show respect and deal calmly with emotional situations

Questions that go unanswered can quickly turn from natural human curiosity to negativity and opposition.



Pillars of the Guide

Provincial Regulations

- Provincial regulations represent the minimum consultation required within CanWEA's Best Practices
- We encourage developers to meet and exceed provincial and local regulations whenever possible

Tools and Templates

- Templates, tools and additional source materials are available within the guide for documents and communication materials



Committed to Review

- CanWEA is committed to working closely with all stakeholders to ensure wind energy projects in Canada are a success and are broadly supported in communities
- Community engagement and public consultation are areas where it is important to strive for continuous improvement
 - The *Best Practices for Community Engagement and Public Consultation* will evolve over time as we learn about new ways to improve our activities



Roll-out

- CanWEA members, municipalities (municipal leaders, MPPs, etc.) and stakeholder groups received the Best Practices guide via a personal letter
- The guide was released to media by way of a CanWEA issued press release
- The document is available for download on CanWEA's website at: www.canwea.ca



Training Sessions

- As part of our commitment to stakeholders and members CanWEA supported implementation of the Best Practices through several training sessions in 2011-2012
- Training sessions will help build skills and capacity within the wind energy sector
 - CanWEA is committed to providing its members with cutting-edge training opportunities
 - Nov. 14-15: Dealing with Emotion and Outrage



Version 2.0

- CanWEA will convene a steering committee to lead process
- Key stakeholder consultations: mayors, farmers, energy experts, consultation experts, government, and citizens who have been through the process
- New elements for consideration: Community fairness models, Community Liaison Committees, identification of socio-political / community / and market acceptance as core
- Customized training began in Q4 2012 + 2013
- Certification as “Engagement Specialist”
- Process: Fall 2012 to publication spring 2013



Discussion

Tom Levy, P.Eng.
613-234-8716 x 238
tomlevy@canwea.ca

