

Alberta update to the Canadian Acoustical Association

Here are some highlights from Alberta by Jack Davis

Direct Current Transmission Lines and Converter Stations

Alberta is continuing with new development for its electrical infrastructure. Among other projects, two High Voltage DC transmission lines (Western Alberta Transmission Line (WATL) and Eastern Alberta Transmission Line (EATL)) have been approved and are currently under construction in the province. Recently, the Commission received a landowner complaint related to noise originated from transmission line construction using “implosive devices” to splice transmission line conductor joints. The complaint alluded that the landowner experienced a ‘concussion-like’ exposure after being subjected to repeated implosion events.

Northeast Capital Industrial Association (NCIA)

The Northeast Capital Industrial Association (NCIA) is a not-for-profit cooperative representing more than 25 industrial members operating in Strathcona County, Sturgeon County, the City of Fort Saskatchewan and Lamont County. The NCIA in collaboration with the Energy Resources Conservation Board (now the Alberta Energy Regulator or AER) have designed a regional approach to environmental noise management—the Regional Noise Management Plan (RNMP) – a regional solution for NCIA member companies to comply with the noise regulation for energy related facilities in Alberta. The RNMP received final approval in the spring of 2013. The AUC concurred with the Alberta Energy Regulator that the NCIA RNMP and its associated regional noise baseline model is an appropriate approach to address the environmental impact of noise for facilities in Alberta’s Industrial Heartland Area. The 2014 NCIA Regional Noise Management Report was submitted to the AER and AUC in September 2014.

For more information on the NCIA follow the link to the NCIA at <http://www.ncia.ab.ca/>

Noise Inquiries

The Alberta Utilities Commission is anticipating an increased number of inquiries regarding environmental noise emissions from electrical facilities (corona noise and transformer noise) and power plants (e.g. wind farms and natural gas fired power plants) with the increased public awareness of issues and the increased use of the ‘social media’.

Counties and Municipal Districts

Several Counties and Municipal Districts in the province of Alberta have drafted noise bylaws pertaining to wind farm development and the Municipal District of Pincher Creek has rezoned private lands where wind turbines have been approved as ‘Wind Farm Industrial’.

Wind Farm Measurement

The AUC is continues to review the literature to gain more insight into measurement techniques and methodologies used in the determination of compliance for wind farm operations with noise regulations.