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Cooper, Kathy

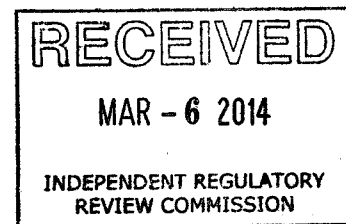
Form Letter Y

From: EP, RegComments <ra-epregcomments@pa.gov> 1 - 34
Sent: Wednesday, March 05, 2014 4:22 PM
To: Environment-Committee@pasenate.com; apankake@pasen.gov; IRR; EP, RegComments; eregop@pahousegop.com; environmentalcommittee@pahouse.net
Cc: EP, MS Development
Subject: FW: Strengthen Proposed Oil and Gas Regulations (Chapter 78)

Good Afternoon,

Below is an email form letter that DEP has received regarding the Proposed Chapter 78 Environmental Protection and Performance Standards at Oil and Gas Well Sites. We have labeled this one "Strengthen Proposed Oil and Gas Regulations". To date, we have received 34 emails of this form letter.

Jessica Shirley | Executive Policy Specialist
Department of Environmental Protection | Policy Office
Rachel Carson State Office Building
400 Market St. | Harrisburg, PA 17101
Phone: 717.772.5643 | Fax: 717.783.8926
www.dep.state.pa.us



-----Original Message-----

From: Michael K [mailto:nazguh251320@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2014 12:08 PM
To: EP, RegComments
Subject: Strengthen Proposed Oil and Gas Regulations (Chapter 78)

Dear Board Members,

I applaud your decision to update Chapter 78 covering Oil and Gas Wells, but urge you to strengthen some of these critical protections. Now is the time to make serious changes to these policies.

Please amend the regulations to prohibit the use of open-air frack pits/impoundments, and require a closed-loop system that utilizes above ground tanks for storage of wastewater. The average frack pit/impoundment is twice the size of an Olympic sized swimming pool, and can be located as close as 300 feet to a home, school, or public area. They also pose a serious risk for leaking dangerous chemicals into the water table, releasing harmful toxins like VOC's into the air, and endangering local wildlife. If several other states like Illinois can ban dirty and dangerous open-air fracking pits, we can too!

Currently, the DEP leaves it up to the drillers to decide when, where, and how to conduct water quality tests before drilling starts, and doesn't require these companies to make this information public. This means that when drinking water supplies are contaminated (as they have been at least 161 times in PA, according to DEP determinations), there is little to no evidence that the water "wasn't already polluted." Drillers should be responsible for the messes they create! The DEP should require standardized baseline testing and make that information available to the public.

Further, it is also critical that we require these companies to remediate water supplies they contaminate to at least Safe Drinking Water Act standards. For companies to provide replacement water that does not meet basic health standards is a practice that should not be allowed in Pennsylvania.

Finally, about 200,000 abandoned wells exist statewide. As drilling spreads and intensifies, so does the chance of accidents, blowouts, and pollution from the intersection of new wells with old ones. The DEP should require the identification of existing wells before site and well construction so as to prevent negative impacts on water supplies and the environment. Operators should also plug and seal or otherwise appropriately address abandoned and orphaned wells according to state safety standards prior to well site construction.

I appreciate your consideration into these rule changes, and your dedicated efforts to keep my family and all Pennsylvanians safe and healthy. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Michael K
1013 Mirror St
Pittsburgh, PA 15217