

Cooper, Kathy

2857



From: ccncoleman@aol.com
Sent: Monday, August 09, 2010 2:21 PM
To: EP, RegComments
Subject: Chapter 78 Regulations

Dear EQB Members,

I am writing to urge the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) to adopt the more rigid natural gas drilling standards as set forth in the proposal made by Harvey Consulting. It is essential to the well being of all Pennsylvania State residents that the following guidelines be adopted:

- Gas company restoration/replacement of polluted or damaged water supplies incurred, due to negligent drilling company activities and accidents
- Stronger cement casing standards to protect underground water supplies and aquifers
- Inclusion of adequate blow preventers on all wells (This would have prevented the first damaging spill in Clearfield County.)

Pennsylvania's most valuable resources are not its limited supply of natural gas. Rather, it is our clean air, water, forests, wildlife and other natural resources that will sustain us and our children will into the future, long after the finite natural gas supplies have been depleted. Clearly, having already incurred over 1400 DEP citations, many natural gas companies cannot be trusted to "do the right thing" to protect our natural resources and citizenry. Do not let gas companies focus on the short term profits which overshadow the very large and morally unacceptable costs of damaging PA's most valuable natural resources. Pennsylvania's clean water is far more precious than natural gas. There are alternative energy sources, but there is absolutely no substitute for clean water. Even our neighbor to the north, New York State, has placed a moratorium on drilling, saying that more study is needed to ensure that drilling does not contaminate the state's water supply. If PA continues drilling, than the only other responsible course of action is to regulate the industry.

It is for these reasons that I urge EQB focus on this issue, as I'm increasingly concerned that we cannot count on our elected officials to do so. After reviewing the extensive political contributions that our legislative officials are accepting from Marcellus Shale, oil, gas, and energy companies. I fear that the protection of our natural resources will take a back seat to political contributions. According to OpenSecrets.org, "Oil and gas companies are always among the industries to spend the most on lobbying, pouring \$132.2 million into these efforts in 2008 alone. Individuals and political action committees affiliated with oil and gas companies have donated \$238.7 million to candidates and parties since the 1990 election cycle." Common Cause furthers that, "The (gas) industry's annual lobbying expenditures (in PA) have roughly tripled in the last three years, from \$579,000 in 2007, to \$1,685,000 in 2009. And from the last quarter of 2009, into the first quarter of 2010, lobbying expenditures rose from \$421,000 to \$716,000."

These startling statistics highlight the role that EQB can play in the protection of PA resources and her citizens.

Thank you for engaging in this very important work and for the opportunity to share my concerns.

Grace A. Coleman
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