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**From:** Joan Shirk [jonishirk@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, August 09, 2010 10:25 PM  
**To:** EP, RegComments  
**Subject:** Oil and Gas Well Casing and Cementing (25 Pa Code, Chapter 78)

AUG 17 2010

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Sir or Madam:

The people who are taking responsibility for protecting our state of Pennsylvania's forests and waters need to know what is going on in the woods of Pennsylvania -- and it isn't pretty.

First may I say that strict laws are needed in order to protect our drinking waters, pristine streams and creeks and our beautiful forests. They are needed to be passed, but more importantly, they need to be enforced and NOT by the **well operators** but by the Pennsylvania agencies formed to protect and regulate those who threaten to harm our environment. The scenario of the well operators policing their own wells and reporting quarterly to DEP reminds me of the fox assigned to watch the hen house and give the farmer a weekly count of how many chickens are in the coop. One day the farmer wakes up to find the fox has vanished (well operators back to Texas). The DEP opens the door to the hen house to find not a hen to be found (i.e., our pristine streams ruined, forests cleared off to make platforms for gas rigs, drinking water contaminated, etc.). I'm sure the well drillers are going to say to DEP, "well, we leaked some chemical-laden fracking waste water into the pristine Dwight Creek. Please fine us another \$36,000 because it was my bad."

That will make people want to move to Pennsylvania -- come fish in contaminated streams, come buy a house but you'll have to drink bottled water because the water is laden with ethane and methane. Come hunt in the woods and come frequently upon the compounds of drilling equipment. All the money that Potter County (we own a cabin in Potter County) and other counties receive for their school systems, governments, etc. from allowing the gas drillers in to decimate the land, will be for naught, because you certainly aren't going to attract people to move to the area to send children to the schools and enjoy the woods where the streams are contaminated, trees cut.

For several years my husband and I would take a trip to a nearby creek in Potter County and sit and watch 3 beavers swim in and out of their beaver hut, watched them take large sticks and carefully place them into the existing beaver dam they had carefully built. I had never seen anything like it on earth and was fascinated by the beavers doing what beavers do. Next time we stopped by to watch the beavers, a human being's footprints were all around the mud near the dam, which had been broken down so that the water, now shallow so that practically nothing could swim in it, let alone a beaver, could flow down to the newly-reinforced bridge down the road so that driller's water trucks could come by and empty the stream of its pristine water. Did you know that directly on either side of the pristine Dwight Creek are the holding "holes" in the ground for the fracking water which appear to be lined with giant trash bags?

I am all for making the laws so strict drillers will think twice before rupturing the land of Pennsylvania, because if they don't do it correctly in Pennsylvania, they won't allow us to stay. Frankly, I would rather see our tax dollars put into research and development of solar, wind and water power rather than making Swiss cheese out of Penn's Woods.

Our drinking water supply was contaminated by migrating ethane and methane when a neighbor drilled for gas a few years ago. We contacted DEP who sent a nice young man to check our water. The well drillers were supposed to drill 1,000 feet from our well. They drilled 1,020 feet. Wasn't that nice? The DEP advised after testing our water that it had methane and ethane in it and that it was caused by the drilling. Later, back-peddling was done by DEP to say that perhaps there had been some mild earthquake in the area that may have caused the migration, that it couldn't have been the

drilling into the earth only 20 lousy feet farther from our well than required which went on noisily 24 hours a day for days on end. The once-pristine, now rotten-egg scented water turned my silver rings totally black after ONE tub bath!!!

The laws that need to be passed and the people in charge of serving the people of Pennsylvania need to serve the needs of the many -- not the needs of the greedy few who will profit from the gas drilling going on in Pennsylvania as we speak. Please do the right thing by Pennsylvanians.

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