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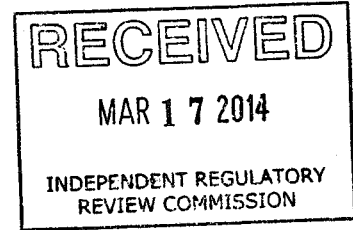


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March 14, 2014

Environmental Quality Board
Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Rachel Carson State Office Building 16th floor
Harrisburg, PA 17105



Dear Board Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on proposed regulations for Act 13 of 2012, to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Environmental Quality Board on the proposed revisions to 25 Pa. Code Chapter 78 (Oil and Gas Wells).

The prohibition of open waste pits is essential to protecting the Commonwealth from the proven ills associated with open pits. Spills and leaks of regulated substances have occurred statewide and increase the risk of water, soil, and air contamination. It is the responsibility of the department to protect our air, soil, and water for future generations which is why the department must promote current best industry practices. Any revisions to these regulations should require produced wastewater, flowback, and other contaminated fluids to be stored in closed loop systems, with a secondary containment, and a leak detection system.

Wastewater from fracking operations contains toxic chemicals that have been linked to a variety of negative health effects. The chemical components of fracking fluids, for example, have been linked to cancer, endocrine disruption, and neurological and immune system problems. Wastewater brought to the surface by drilling can contain substances such as volatile organic compounds (VOCs) with potential impacts on air quality and human health. The practice of storing such substances in open air pits is a threat to the environment and our health. These wastewater pits can, and do fail. When they do, they may put the quality of our drinking water at risk, and present hazards to wildlife and our environment. In some cases, they are so volatile that they may catch on fire or explode, putting the lives of nearby residents and their property in danger. Best Industry practices use closed loop systems which utilize tanks to store wastewater. The DEP can, and should, hold the industry to this same standard.

Thank you for your consideration, and the opportunity to comment on the proposed regulations.

Very truly yours,

MIKE HANNA
76th District
State Representative