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Environmental Quality Board  
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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

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ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD

Members of the Environmental Quality Board,

Pennsylvania has been experiencing a rush to drill gas wells in the Marcellus Shale. While drilling and energy companies are reaping the benefits Pennsylvania's streams and rivers are left with a huge problem – the highly toxic wastewater from the gas drilling process.

I am pleased to see The DEP is proposing new revisions to the Chapter 95 discharge standards for wastewater containing high levels of Total Dissolved Solids (TDS). This proposal will go a long way towards ensuring that our drinking water supplies will not have unsafe levels of TDS. I support the passage of this new regulation and hope it will not be weakened. However, I do not believe we can wait until 2011 for this regulation to take affect. We need these regulations to be in place as soon as possible. If we have to wait until 2011 then the DEP should stop giving out more drilling permits. DEP should also stop allowing existing or proposed wastewater plants to pollute our rivers unless they follow these new rules.

Pennsylvania still faces many challenges in better protecting our health and environment from the potential dangers of Marcellus Shale drilling. I hope that this is only the start and that the Environmental Quality Board and the DEP will pursue other avenues of protection, like adding discharge standards for those contaminants that are frequently found in Marcellus Shale gas drilling wastewater. These would include bromides, arsenic, benzene, radium, magnesium, and possibly others.

Steve Hvozdovich  
4890 Leona Dr  
Pittsburgh, PA 15227  
412-884-6948