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Tate, Michele

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From: Jennifer Kennedy [jenloomken@yahoo.com]

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Sent: Friday, December 18, 2009 8:26 AM**To:** EP, RegCommentsINDEPENDENT REGULATORY
ENERGY COMMISSION**Subject:** Concern over drilling for natural gas in PA

I am a Pennsylvania resident and support the message from the Wissahickon Growing Greener group below. The state of Pennsylvania can and must do better for our children.

Jennifer Kennedy, Horsham, PA

My name is Erin Crump and I am the founder of a local environmental group in the Wissahickon Valley watershed called Wissahickon Growing Greener. I use gas to heat my home and to cook my family meals. I drink the water from my faucet and I give my children a bath before they go to sleep. Over the past few weeks, I have been educated on the horrors caused by the process of Hydraulic Fracturing for natural gas not just in my state, but all over the country.

Not long ago, I learned of the Halliburton Loophole in the 2005 Energy Bill and am appalled that this loophole exempts oil and natural gas industries from the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Superfund Law and others. I recently learned of the plans to drill for natural gas in the Marcellus Shale in Pennsylvania and have become aware of how these plans could directly affect the health of the people in my community as well as millions of other lives across Pennsylvania.

I have become informed about the method of hydraulic fracturing. This process blasts water and tons of sand and chemicals some 8,000 feet into the ground to fracture the Marcellus Shale and releases natural gas. There are over 200 chemicals used in this process – chemicals that are endocrine disruptors, carcinogens, neurotoxins, and many other toxic additives present in the fracturing liquid. The companies doing the drilling are not required to disclose the names of all of the chemicals, instead, they list them as "Proprietary Component." 1 to 5 million gallons of water is used each time a well is drilled. And that same 1 to 5 million gallons of water is used each time they frack again, up to 18 times. If there are ONLY 1600 wells in PA, that's 1600 wells x 1 million gallons of water x 18 times, that's almost 29 BILLION gallons of water infused with this toxic fracking liquid. And this estimate is on the low end.

One of the most bothersome contaminants in the wastewater is a gritty substance called Total Dissolved Solids, or TDS, a mixture of salt and other minerals that lie deep underground. Drilling wastewater contains so much TDS that it can be five times as salty as sea water. Gas drilling companies currently dispose of their wastewater in Pennsylvania's municipal sewage plants, which then discharge it into rivers and streams. In an October 2008 Press Release, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency warns against this form of treatment, because the plants aren't equipped to remove TDS or any of the chemicals the water may contain. Of even more concern, TDS can disrupt the plants' treatment of ordinary sewage, including human waste.

about all the others that we don't know about because of the Halliburton loophole and the lack of disclosure from these drillers? What about the radioactive materials? What about the air pollution? Think about the 800 gallons of diesel fuel needed to run each well every day. What about the noise pollution? The destruction of forested areas and the increased erosion? What about the inability of fish to survive such high levels of TDS in their water? This is not someone else's problem. This is my problem. Our problem. Let's find ways to reduce the amount of natural gas we use. Let's make our homes and businesses more energy efficient and supplement energy use with solar or wind power.

By your own account, the DEP's Bureau of Oil and Gas Management regulates the safe exploration, development and recovery of Marcellus Shale natural gas reservoirs in a manner that will protect the commonwealth's natural resources and the environment. Your plan will be acceptable when you are able to reach for a nice tall glass, fill it up with the treated wastewater products, and then let your children drink it.

Thank you for listening.

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