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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

From: Jeffrey Becker [becker.jeff@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, January 30, 2010 12:19 PM
To: EP, RegComments
Subject: Comments Re: 25 PA. CODE CH. 95-Wastewater Treatment Requirements

Dear Environmental Quality Board,

As a Pennsylvania resident, I would like to make the following comments on the new proposed wastewater rules (Chapter 95):

We need safe drinking water! DEP's proposal of 500 mg/L for Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) and 250 mg/L each for Sulfates and Chlorides will go a long way towards ensuring that our drinking water supplies will not have unsafe levels of TDS and these other contaminants. DEP must maintain these TDS standards despite the pressure by commercial interests to weaken them.

Further, we need to protect against overly acidic or alkaline discharges. The pH of the water allowed to be discharged into the watershed must be between 6.5 and 8.5, the levels prescribed by the EPA.

Marcellus Shale drilling wastewater will produce contaminants for which limits have not previously been set. These contaminants include but are not limited to bromides, arsenic, benzene, radium, magnesium, and possibly others. Many of these contaminants are toxic to humans and very difficult AND COSTLY for Municipal Water Supplies to remove. The new regulations must specifically address these contaminants by name and set limits to prevent these contaminants from entering the watershed.

We need these regulations to be in place as soon as possible to protect our watersheds and drinking water. To ensure compliance with these new regulations, the DEP must incorporate wastewater treatment in the drilling permit process. Companies applying for a permit must show budgets, technical documents, technical drawings, and survey plans for placement of treatment facilities when submitting permit applications. Physical inspections of the drilling sites to compare the submitted plans to the constructed facilities must be conducted prior issuance of the drilling permits.

In adopting these new rules the DEP must make existing permit holders comply with new rules or face shutdown.

DEP needs to ensure that all aspects of the generation of Marcellus wastewater are regulated. Currently there are no requirements to track wastewater from drilling sites to treatment plants, and there is no oversight over the reuse of Marcellus wastewater.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Becker
Registered Pennsylvania Voter and Taxpayer

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