

From: Barb Jarmoska [barb@freshlife.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 07, 2010 10:03 PM
To: EP, RegComments
Subject: 25 Pa. Code Chapter 95



<>To whom it may concern:

On August 18th the Environmental Quality Board proposed to amend 25 Pa. Code Chapter 95 relating to Wastewater Treatment Requirements. I am writing to ask that you accept that proposal and pass and enforce new regulations that include the elimination of a redundant provision, the recognition of applicable TMDL requirements, and the establishment of new effluent standards for new sources of wastewaters containing high Total Dissolved Solids concentrations.

<>As you are aware, the existing practice for high TDS wastewaters is to allow this water to be returned to our rivers untreated for TDS, sulfates and chlorides. Treatment is merely dilution, and that is left, unaided, to the river. As documented by the rising levels of TDS in the waters of this Commonwealth, the rivers are already in peril, and dilution can no longer be considered adequate treatment for high TDS wastewaters. <>We are entering a new era in Pennsylvania. The gas industry has painted a bulls eye on the Marcellus shale, a geographical formation that lies deep beneath the ground where we live and work, and play, and raise our families. We are, in many ways, ill prepared to deal with what is coming our way.

We are also poor learners when history offers to teach us. This Commonwealth has been ravaged in the past – by the lumber barons and the coal industry. We are still paying a price. I cannot take my granddaughter for a walk in the woods and show her a tree that takes 4 people, arms outstretched and fingers touching, to encircle. I need not tell you of the environmental consequences we continue to cope with because of coal mining. <>More recent history in Texas can offer us a glimpse of the air and water pollution challenges we are about to face as Pennsylvania's forests and farm fields give up trees and soybeans to become home, instead, to gas wells.

It is paradoxical to me that we claim to be spending trillions of dollars on a war for freedom, and yet here in America, there is pervasive distrust of government, suspicion of the bureaucracy, and cynicism regarding the entire political process. Money has become the ultimate source of power, but is it the final measure of the quality of life? Can that which we treasure most ever be measured in dollars and cents? What is, after all, the value of a day spent hiking in an unbroken forest, bathing in a clean mountain stream and sleeping under a dark and starry sky? <>When money is the only measure of value, belief in true freedom is replaced by a sense of helplessness. At the very time the gas industry is massively migrating to Pennsylvania, bringing risks of new environmental challenges and disasters, why did DEP lose over 25% of its budget this year? How much influence over that budget decision did the millions of dollars of gas industry lobby money have? Has the money and control held by corporate giants finally reached the tipping point where common sense is crucified once and for all?

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Common sense tells us this. Our streams and rivers are already in peril. The gas industry is moving here with warp speed. They are seeking, through the permitting process, to remove literally billions of gallons of water from our rivers, streams and aquifers. Once used, these once-fresh waters will contain high levels of contaminants – including Total Dissolved Solids. How can we possibly allow these TDS-laced waters to be dumped back into rivers whose water levels will, at the exact time when dilution is most needed, be missing billions and billions of gallons of water? Common sense says we need these new regulations.

<>The scientists on the Environmental Quality Board say exactly the same thing. Outside the arena of politics and corporate power, common sense and good science are in agreement on this issue.

The Clean Streams Law gives DEP the authority to preserve and improve the purity of the waters of this Commonwealth by adopting rules and regulations as necessary to accomplish this task. <>I implore you to do exactly that by fully adopting the recommendations of the Environmental Quality Board, passing rigid new TDS standards, and implementing these regulations immediately. Under the currently proposed Chapter 95 regulations, existing industry is exempt from these new regulations. I further request that, as wastewater permits come up for renewal, these TDS standards apply equally to all industries dumping TDS laced wastewater into our rivers and streams.

Thank you.

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