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Date: 27 August 2009
To: Environmental Quality Board
Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
P.O. Box 8477
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8477

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Ref: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Environmental Quality Board (EQB) proposed amendment to the regulations on Oil and Gas Casing and Cementing, Chapter 78.

Dear Members of the Environmental Quality Board:

I agree with the recommendation by the EQB to update the existing requirements regarding the drilling, casing, cementing, testing, monitoring and plugging of oil and gas wells, and the protection of water supplies.

I am also concerned about local reservoir supplies. Our Community is selling large portions of our water supply to Marcellus shale drillers.

If at some point there is a drought condition, like we have had many hot dry summers, and the residents are required to restrict their water use, Will the drilling companies be forced to restrict their use also?

Who would have the power in our small community to halt a multimillion dollar drilling process? Once the process of fracking starts it goes 24 hours a day until it is complete. The water reservoirs could be sucked dry to supply their operations. Our community will suffer because of it. Our water quality could also be jeopardized if the reservoirs ran too low

I believe there should be language in the regulations that defines the trigger point, or cut off danger level, that protects local water supplies from being pre-maturely depleted from drilling operations. When this point is reached, the available water to drillers is gradually reduced or stopped. This seems like it may involve hydrology engineering language and analysis so it is difficult for me to give an example of a possible solution. Language such as " When reservoirs reach 50% capacity, water sold to drillers is reduced by 50%," or something like that. It should be fair and reasonable but protective of the public.

Furthermore, there should be an additional regulation which prevents all the water from being sucked out of the earth by the drillers, on a site, under a drilling pad, if they decide to drill wells for frack water on site. This would deplete the water supply of all the adjacent land owners.

Thank you for considering these ideas.

Sincerely,
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