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Cooper, Kathy

**From:** RegComments@pa.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, May 04, 2015 3:41 PM  
**To:** Environment-Committee@pasenate.com; apankake@pasen.gov; IRRC;  
 RegComments@pa.gov; eregop@pahousegop.com;  
 environmentalcommittee@pahouse.net; gvitali@pahouse.net  
**Cc:** ra-epmsdevelopment@pa.gov  
**Subject:** Comment notice for - Advanced Notice of Final Rulemaking - Environmental Protection Performance Standards at Oil and Gas Well Sites (7-484)



**Re: Advanced Notice of Final Rulemaking - Environmental Protection Performance Standards at Oil and Gas Well Sites (7-484)**

**The following comments have been received regarding the above-referenced advanced notice of final rulemaking.**

Commentator Information:

WILLIAM EMICK  
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 IRRC  
 2015 MAY -4 PM 3: 50

Comments entered:

I have been a resident of Lycoming County, PA for most of my life, living on a small farm in Proctor, PA and attending Vo-tech College Williamsport Area Community College. I was taught the basics of welding technology, returning years later to complete my degree work at Pennsylvania College of Technology (P.C.T). My trade was welding and specifically pipe welding, a skill I mastered from an early age. I went into the construction industry at 19 years old. During that time I advanced through the ranks of pipe welders, mechanical piping design and installation of piping systems and pipelines throughout the United States. My skills were perfected from working with seasoned workers, men who built this country with their hands and common sense skills, brought up in the United Association of Journeymen of the pipefitting industry. After many years of running all over this country building Nuclear, Coal and Natural Gas Power Plants, Refineries, Paper Mills, Breweries, Pipelines and related facilities, I decided to return to my home town and settle down in 2001.

I taught college courses for three years at P.C.T. in the Advanced Welding Engineering department along with finishing my degree work. I was offered a full-time teaching position, but the pay was too low for my skill set and returned to the construction field. The Marcellus Shale play was just getting started in lower NY State. I was requested by a large pipeline contractor, Precision Pipeline Co, to set up and oversee a large fabrication facility in Westville, NY. This was not my first job working in the gas industry. I had spent most of my career working in this industry installing pipelines and facilities across the US. This was my first time working within the Marcellus Gas, although at the same I could see the potential for a lot of growth in the upcoming years for this market. As time went on and I moved on from contractor to contractor

installing and fabricating piping systems, I decided with permission from my wife, to start my own Fabrication/Construction Company. It was the right time and place, if there ever was to move into such an adventure.

I saved up around \$250,000 of my own money from annuities and investments and began research on how to go about starting my own company, which began by renting a two car garage in Montoursville, PA in 2009. Filing with the state and buying up what tools and equipment I would need to get started, I then looked to my connections in the industry. A chief welding inspector, Paul Young, who knew me and my abilities, was working for Chief Oil & Gas, opening my first door. I started fabricating piping systems for Chief with the help of a few guys I knew and worked with over the years. In the first few months I could see my savings depleting fast due to the amount of money going out goes faster than the money coming back. My next step was trying to borrow more capital from a bank to run my business. The kind of capital I needed was not something the banks were offering. Thankfully, a relative of mine said he would help me out for a percentage in my business. This capital helped me move forward to \$1 million in business the first year, \$20 million in the next and close to \$30 million until 2014 I reached over \$34 million. I had to expand in 2010 and purchased a 15 acre industrial facility in Williamsport, PA, our fabrication facility, including our main office in Montoursville.

I have 23 full-time office employees comprised of engineers, drafts people, safety, accounting and administrative staff. Being a union labor contractor I average 98 union employees and at peak times over 200. 90% of my work force comes from the PA area. At peak times I have to take on workers from surrounding states, pulling the most qualified workers since this type of work requires very skilled crafts people. We do train a lot of local people and I help them enroll in the local unions creating high paying jobs with full benefits and retirement. This has been an up-hill battle proving "you get what you pay for", although difficult, our repeated quality and reliability to get the job done on time and safely has ensured our success.

With our success our company and employees strive to keep a watchful eye on the activities behind the scenes. Everyday citizens from counties all around our area are my employees; they too live and appreciate the quality of life we have here in PA. We do not want to see the gas companies in any way degrading our environment because we all use the lands for hunting, fishing, hiking and other recreational activities; the outdoors here are the greatest gift to us. The most asked question I get from neighbors and others is what do you see out there every day with the fracking and pipelines? Do you think it is safe, do you think it is hurting our environment? My answer to them is this; my company is installing the pipelines and facilities and working under some of the most stringent rules and regulations in the construction industry to the point at times it seems quite ridiculous. For example, if we carry a bottle of water onto a site we cannot pour it onto the ground without creating a "spill report"; go to any other construction site not gas related and see what they get away with on a daily basis, or just walk over to your neighbors farm and ask them if they have to fill out any reports for all the fertilizers, fuels, oils, pesticides, fecal matter and other chemicals they spill or use over the land daily.

From the prospective of common sense and first-hand knowledge the gas companies are the only hope we have in PA to create jobs and increase the quality of life for millions of residents. The gas related operations are extremely safe and environmentally sound. They are decreasing the carbon foot print in the environment by improving more usage of natural gas than traditional fuels. "The fact of the matter is what are we giving up as residents for the improved quality of life". The only thing I have seen on the down side is the increased traffic from construction activities and this is only temporary.

Our state and this country has a great opportunity to become the world's leader in gas

production becoming energy independent in addition to creating thousands of jobs and small businesses like mine throughout PA.

Respectfully submitted;

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No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
Patrick McDonnell

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