

3042

My name is Dianne Connelly. I am here today to speak about my concerns with the proposed fracking which may take place adjacent to my neighborhood, Weatherburn Heights.

To start off, I did not know much about fracking until the past few weeks, but since something so controversial and dangerous has come so close to our schools and plan, I started reading and researching to better understand how fracking is done, and why it has so many environmental and health concerns. And since I am a registered nurse, I especially focused on the health effects in the literature. Since we are talking about fracking concerns to health, I compared fracking practices to medical care because medicine cannot achieve positive health outcomes without taking the research, analyzing it, and using what they learned to help make necessary changes to protect and improve health. You see, through medical research, it has been found that to achieve optimal health, prevention is the key to keeping ourselves, especially our children in the best health possible. Biologically speaking, to keep children in good health, they need clean air, clean food,

2015 MAY -7 AM 8: 56

RECEIVED
IRRC

and clean water. With a proposed fracking facility adjacent to our children, this violates our code as to what we need to help keep our children healthy. For you see, children, especially, are more vulnerable to air and water pollution for several reasons and I would like to explain in simple terms why. For instance, when a child is outside playing a strenuous activity, they will take large gulps of air in and they are more sensitive to pollutants because their lungs are more permeable to age 6 (what this means is toxins can get into their lungs more easily). In regards to water contamination, babies and children can be more easily affected because they drink more water in relation to their body size so they experience more exposure to water and their possible contaminates than an adult would. With this said, our children in Weatherburn would be double dosed to the toxins because not only may they be living next to a fracking facility which has known toxic chemicals such as carcinogens (cancer-causing)in its mix, but then they have to go to school and breathe in the same, toxic cocktail of air. I feel it is highly unethical that gas companies would frack or even want to frack near residential plans and schools based on the evidence. Why

we in Weatherburn are so adamant that fracking has no place directly beside our plan (and our position is not whether we believe or not believe in fracking) it is that our children will not get a break from the air pollution since we are 0.25 miles from the wells and within a mile of the schools. So our children will sleep, play, and go to school in a potentially, toxic area. Another major concern, I see, is that most of our Weatherburn children are either in utero to around age 6. So from what I already stated above, our kids are in more danger due to their young ages, not fully developed immune systems and the extreme, close proximity to the fracking wells. And if you remember from high school science for example with radiation, time and distance is what you go by in regards to toxicity. The closer and longer you are exposed to something toxic, the greater the chance you can have an adverse effect. As I read for hours, I did not and still do not understand that if so many research studies state that there has been documented cases of ill health that range from nausea, to asthma, to full blown leukemia, why don't we just take the stand of prevention? The one conclusion that all of the studies pointed to was that there has been documented

alterations in health in some of our children (especially the ones between the fracking site and up to 0.5 miles of the wells). The recommendations of many of the studies indicate that until more research is available, we have to be cautious and keep the fracking sites as far from pregnant woman and children as possible. And unfortunately, research takes time. In relation to medicine, if medicine ignored the evidence-based research, our patients would not have the best health outcomes and more harm would come to them. So gas companies need to step up to the plate to, listen to research studies, and alter their practices of fracking so close to large volumes of children. And as we all know from the recent Greene county tragedy, is that no matter how careful man is, toxic gases, mixed with the power of Mother Nature and the component of human error is just something that cannot be totally eradicated. So until the gas executives take into consideration the evidence to alter their current fracking practices of fracking anywhere they deem, we have to be the voices, protectors, and advocates for our children. To conclude, I, as well as the other parents and concerned members of our community are here to please ask for your help,

guidance, support and expertise to help us keep our most prized assets safe; it is not money, it is not power, it is not our houses. It is our beautiful, precious, vulnerable children that cannot ever be replaced.

Thank you