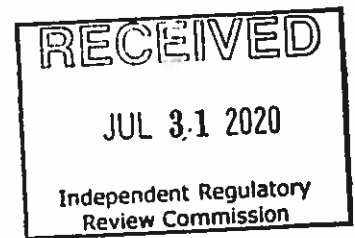


3256

Kathy Cooper

From: ecomment@pa.gov
Sent: Friday, July 24, 2020 11:06 AM
To: Environment-Committee@pasenate.com; IRRRC; environmentalcommittee@pahouse.net; regcomments@pa.gov; ntroutman@pasen.gov; timothy.collins@pasenate.com; gking@pahousegop.com
Cc: c-jflanaga@pa.gov
Subject: Comment received - Proposed Rulemaking: Control of VOC Emissions from Oil and Natural Gas Sources (#7-544)

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The enclosed comment was received as part of the following testimony:

Testimony name: Public Hearing 3 - Proposed #7-544
Testimony date: 6/25/2020 12:00:00 AM
Testimony location: WebEx

Re: eComment System

The Department of Environmental Protection has received the following comments on Proposed Rulemaking: Control of VOC Emissions from Oil and Natural Gas Sources (#7-544).

Commenter Information:

Sandra (Bili) O'Hara
(scroneaue@buffalo.edu)
3116 McCloy Ave
Murrysville, PA 15668 US

Comments entered:

Verbal comments given at 25 June 2020 hearing. See emailed written comment below:

I support the proposed measures to reduce the release of volatile organic compounds from existing wells. However, this amendment does not adequately address methane release which is a major contributor to anthropogenic climate change.

This amendment must be altered to hold companies accountable for emissions from their low-producing or abandoned wells.

Additionally, the ability to phase out routine monitoring for regularly compliant wells is unacceptable and should be addressed before the adoption of this amendment.

Our climate system is complex and by continuing to release greenhouse gasses, including the methane released by wells in Pennsylvania, we are engaging in a giant natural experiment.

I worry about increasing storm intensity and a rise in economic damages from flooding and slope instability. Slope stability issues are already economically significant for Pennsylvania taxpayers. The municipality I lived in this past year reported in their 2019 budget document that they addressed about a million dollars on unexpected landslides in 2018.

Changes in temperature and precipitation also affect growing seasons and our farmers' ability to produce food.

Personally, I enjoy spending time outdoors, so a local concern of mine is that a warming climate will exacerbate existing disease vectors like ticks and mosquitos. I worry that new vector species will become viable within my community. I worked for a County Health department in NY for a summer collecting and identifying mosquitoes for virus testing before moving here to Pennsylvania so I have firsthand experience with local government response to disease vectors.

In Pennsylvania, lyme disease is an often overlooked but very serious public health issue and there are consistently Culex pipiens/restuans samples testing positive for West Nile.

Increased disease vector presence and virus positive samples in an area often mean increased biocide spraying events that have their own associated health and ecological risks if not properly implemented.

In conclusion, I support adding this amendment to reduce harmful emissions from existing wells. But we need to ensure continuous monitoring of both volatile organic compounds and methane, regardless of compliance history, and increase coverage to include low-producing and abandoned wells.

Better yet, let's shift our focus from oil and gas to innovative, sustainable energy alternatives so we can minimize health and environmental impacts going forward.

Thank you.

No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Jessica Shirley

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