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**From:** responsiblydrillingalliance@googlegroups.com  
[mailto:responsiblydrillingalliance@googlegroups.com] **On Behalf Of** RDA -  
Responsible Drilling Alliance  
**Sent:** 10 November 2011 05:54  
**To:** responsiblydrillingalliance@googlegroups.com  
**Subject:** RDA Newsletter - Public perception, water quality, air quality, and a dire  
piece of pro-industry legislation

**Dear RDA Members,**

**This week, we share news about public perception, water quality, air quality, and a dire piece of pro-industry legislation.**

### **Public Perception**

We are all bombarded with gas industry-sponsored ads on television, radio, billboards, and print media. Although many folks are savvy enough to realize that paid propaganda is just that, this multi million dollar "Clean-burning, All-American fuel" campaign funded by the gas industry is coupled with the fact that it is difficult to find trustworthy conventional media sources for reliable, unbiased shale gas information. Public opinion is easiest to shape when the public at large is hearing a one-sided message. Given the consistent bias of our local newspapers and radio stations, that one side is exactly what most Lycoming County residents are exposed to.

### **Water Quality**

One consistently dependable, thought-provoking reporter is Laura Legere of Times Shamrock Communications. Witness her article on the recently released PSU study on drinking-water wells. Published in the Towanda Daily Review on Wednesday, October 26th, titled, "**Study finds bromide in water after drilling**", Legere gets to the heart of a disturbing issue in her lead paragraph: "A recent study by Penn State researchers found that bromide increased in drinking water supplies after nearby Marcellus Shale drilling, leading the authors to suggest tripling the current distance around a natural gas well where drillers are presumed responsible for contamination."

Legere goes one to explain, "... the increase in bromide levels recorded in seven of 42 wells may suggest more subtle impacts to groundwater that need more research... Bromide alone is not a human health hazard, but elevated levels of it can create cancer-causing compounds when combined with chlorine during drinking water disinfection.

"Researchers found that increases in bromide appeared related to the drilling process, not hydraulic fracturing. Bromide is sometimes used as a mud additive during the drilling process and can be stored in pits at drilling sites. Industry and homeowners pre-drilling water tests rarely include bromide, but the compound "may hold promise as a more sensitive indicator of groundwater impacts since it is typically near or below detectable concentrations in undisturbed groundwater," state the study's authors."

Contrast this forthright approach to that of the Williamsport Sun Gazette, where the headline from an AP article on the same study proclaimed' **"No significant evidence of fracking contamination"**.

Legere does not ignore this fact, and writes, "...the study.... did not find any statistically significant increases in methane... ( in water wells)... or contaminants common in the wastewater that flows out of natural gas wells after hydraulic fracturing".

While the AP article makes some mention of elevated bromides, unlike Legere's work, it does not easily lead a reader to ask what should be an obvious questions. If the high percentage of private water wells with increased bromine is a representative sample, what might that mean for public water supplies (which all use chlorine for disinfection) near drilling sites as our enormous gasfield build out ramps up? And what other chemicals and compounds might also appear in water supplies near drilling activity?

Another response to the PSU study comes from former gas industry executive, Cooperstown NY's James Northrup, who points out, " 79% of the wells (in the full study of 233 water wells) were not tested for methane. Wells where methane was a known problem were not included in the study. In the 21% of water wells tested for methane, testing took place before methane migration would be expected to appear."

### **Air Quality**

With the rush to drill, protecting private and public water supplies are not our only concern. Air quality is an equal or greater potential health threat, especially as more and more pipelines and associated compressor stations are built.

In view of these less publicized but equally disconcerting concerns about the air we breathe, RDA is sponsoring an event at Lycoming College with Matt Walker of the Clean Air Council. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us next week for the:

**Protecting the Air We Breathe Workshop**

Thursday November 17, 6pm – 8pm  
Lycoming College Heim Science Bldg Room G11

Environmental and Health Impacts from Gas Industry Operations and Tools for Cleaner Air. An evening of education and empowerment with Matt Walker of the Clean Air Council.

Free Admission

Hosted by: Responsible Drilling Alliance and Clean Air Council

**Horrific piece of legislation**

Lastly, there seems to be no end to problems with PA House Bill 1950, which was approved out of the house finance committee last week along party lines. The bill is available for your perusal at:

<http://stateimpact.npr.org/pennsylvania/2011/11/02/house-bill-1950/>

RDA urges you to please call or e-mail your state rep, state senator and the Governor to ask they not pass anything like this horrific piece of legislative excrement. It would take pages to adequately describe the worst provisions of the bill. Start with a disastrous model ordinance that all local governments (townships, municipalities) must adopt if they are ever to be allowed to receive any revenue from gas drilling fees. Move on to the pathetic amount of revenue the fee will raise, about 1% of the value of the gas extracted over the lifetime of a well at the current low price for NG, lower if the price goes up. Apparently, unlike in other gas producing states, our house finance committee majority doesn't think we deserve any more than a fixed low amount per shale gas well in production here. Watch out for a potential window for eminent domain, and a provision to use royalty dollars from gas wells on state-owned land for superficial lowball funding for environmental initiatives, instead of allocating the funds to DCNR, where they are currently disbursed.

Also included is a gas industry gift provision that would allow for faster permit reviews to be done by private contractors.

Some fine economic thinkers put their heads together to come up with this bill in its present form, industry economic thinkers no doubt. This is your state folks, is

1% anything close to what it will take to offset the risk we are facing in what may eventually be 2/3 of our Commonwealth?

Just a little searching around the 'net will give you a quiver full of arrows with which to attack this industry-driven bill.

If you need RDA's assistance with any questions, contact us at [info@responsibledrillingalliance.org](mailto:info@responsibledrillingalliance.org) and we'll be glad to give you some ammunition, but as always, comments to our elected officials are always best in your own sincere words. Better not procrastinate though, deliberations are set to begin next week in the House.

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