



Now is the time

April 24, 2015



Greetings!

DEP has extended the comment period on their proposed regulatory revisions for the natural gas industry. Our feature article introduces some of the important improvements and gives details on 3 upcoming hearings. Please attend and show your support for more thorough environmental regulations. We need to show DEP how important this is to us, so that they follow through with the revisions and don't back down at the behest of the industry. The article that follows introduces the EPA fracking study and emphasizes the role states must play in protecting their citizens. This issue leaves you with a nice taste of the Banff Mountain Film Festival, which RDA attended about two weeks ago.

It is up to us, the good citizens of PA to be sure that this industry is being regulated properly. Whether you are "for" or "against" fracking, better rules & regulations can only help to protect us.

Please do what you can on your local level. Earth day is every day... keep the feeling alive.

Sincerely,

Brooke Woodside
Managing Editor

Visit our website at: www.rdapa.org

Now is the time to be heard

The PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is currently accepting public comment on a planned update/revision of Chapter 78, the rulebook on oil and gas regulations in PA.

Industry lobbyists are waging an orchestrated attack on all proposed regulations that would offer protections for our land, water, and public health.

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In Other News

Colorado Fracking Wastewater Injection Site Up In Flames

Explosions and fireballs erupted from the fire throughout the afternoon, spewing black smoke into the sky, which was visible for miles. The roar of the fire sounded like a freight train rumbling past.

A little after 3 p.m., the fire spread south toward a grouping of tanks, a loud whistling sound preceded a large explosion that launched a tank into the air. The tank landed about 60 feet from the site.



Once the Chapter 78a revisions go into effect, production pits for storing drilling waste/contaminants on unconventional well sites will be prohibited.

The drilling industry is trying to block even modest improvements to current regulations. In addition, industry groups like the Pennsylvania Independent Oil & Gas Association (PIOGA) don't want the public to have a voice in the [process](#).

Our voices must be heard, demanding that DEP tighten regulations, including:

- Prohibiting operators from using open storage pits for drilling waste and other contaminants for both conventional and unconventional oil and gas wells
- Requiring drillers to check for orphaned and abandoned wells near their drilling pads and paths
- Implementing noise controls to protect the quality of life of people living near well pads
- Restoring potable, clean water to those whose water supplies have been affected by drilling.

[Click here for a more thorough list of key talking points.](#)

The talking points were drafted by a subcommittee comprised of Clean Water Action, Earthworks, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Clean Air Council, Mountain Watershed Association, PennEnvironment, Sierra Club, and Berks Gas Truth. We would like to thank those folks for their work on this. There are obviously plenty of areas within the revision that people could focus on but they tried to limit the talking points to what they felt were several key areas. It is also important to note **Chapter 78a** when referring to/commenting on **unconventional gas wells**.

Those who wish to present testimony during the hearing are asked to register at least 24 hours in advance by contacting the DEP Policy Office at 717-783-8727. Individuals will be called to testify in the order they registered. If time permits at the hearing, those who did not register in advance will be given the opportunity to testify.

The other two hearings will also take place from 6-9 pm as follows:

- April 29 - Washington and Jefferson College, Rossin Campus Center - Allen Ballroom, 60 S. Lincoln St., Washington, PA 15301

[Click here to read more.](#)

Fossil Fuels Just Lost the Race Against Renewables

This is the beginning of the end.

The race for renewable energy has passed a turning point. The world is now adding more capacity for renewable power each year than coal, natural gas and oil combined. And there's no going back.

[Click here to read more.](#)

Williams Central Compressor Flares

Frank Finan takes us into the infrared dimension with a look at the Williams Compressor Station through the lense of his FLIR camera.



Williams Central Compressor flares, naked eye and GasFindIR

Public Hearing in Williamsport on DEP Final Rulemaking

**Monday, May 4, 2015
6 - 9 pm**

**PA College of Technology
Klump Academic Center
1 College Ave.
Williamsport, PA 17701**

The DEP is holding three public hearings across the state to discuss the proposed changes to oil and gas regulations. We are very fortunate to have one happening right here in Williamsport, so let's plan to attend and make it worthwhile.

[Click here for more info.](#)

Proposed Water

- April 30 - Warren County Courthouse, 204 4th Ave., Warren, PA 16365

Your participation in your local hearing is imperative to ensuring protective proposals are adopted. As industry seeks to stifle it, we need your voice now more than ever!

Background:

The original comment period closed in March of 2014. A major change that occurred between the closing of the first comment period and the current reopening was that in July of last year a law was passed that regulations must differentiate between conventional and unconventional oil and gas wells. Essentially, separate laws and regulations for each industry (but many are still actually the same, like well plugging requirements). So now we have Chapter 78a for unconventional wells and Chapter 78 for the others.

[Click here to see the draft regulatory revisions.](#)

(Chapter 78 goes from pages 1-120 and Chapter 78a, from 121-283.)

If you can't attend a hearing - you can still make your voice heard!

[Click here to submit a written comment](#) on the regulations, or send an e-mail to RegComments@pa.gov. Comments on the currently proposed changes are preferred, so try to elaborate on what's planned.

You may also send comments to DEP Policy Office, 400 Market St., P.O. Box 2063, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2063. Comments must be received by May 19, 2015. A subject heading of the rulemaking, the commentator's full name, and a return address must be included in each comment submission. [Click here to view a sample comment letter](#)

[Click here for a good source of further information from C.O.G.E.N.T.](#)

EPA Chief Defends Forthcoming Fracking Study, Says It Will 'Add To' Dialogue

Let's make sure Gina McCarthy's statement rings true for PA:

"States really are the primary regulator of water supplies. And they have been individually looking at the issues of hydrofracking because they care about their water supplies."

The following is reprinted from the Huffington Post:

by Kate Sheppard, 4-21-15, WASHINGTON -- The Environmental Protection Agency is expected to release a much-anticipated draft study this spring that will examine whether hydraulic fracturing can contaminate ground water supplies. While the topic of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, for natural gas has generated a lot of attention, it's not clear whether the agency's study will clear up any of the major lingering questions about the safety of the process.

Fracking uses a high-pressure stream of water, sand and chemicals to tap into oil and gas reserves in rock formations, and has become increasingly common in recent years in many parts of the United States. There are a number of indications that the EPA's study will not resolve many of the key concerns communities have raised about fracking's impact on the safety of their drinking water supplies. As [InsideClimate News reported last month](#), the agency's ability to gather data has been limited, due to both resistance from the oil and gas

Withdrawal from the Loyalsock Creek

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission will hold a public meeting on Chief Oil and Gas Company's proposed water withdrawal from the Loyalsock Creek at Forksville. The original meeting scheduled for April 14th was canceled. A new date/time/location will soon be announced by SRBC.

Respect Our Voices on Oil and Gas Oversight

If the Pennsylvania Independent Oil and Gas Association (PIOGA) had their way, PA shalefield residents and public interest groups would "have no place" on oil and gas oversight bodies.

Tell PA Governor Tom Wolf and DEP Secretary John Quigley that shalefield residents and public interest groups should be front and center in overseeing the oil and gas industries.

[Click here to sign this petition prepared for you by the Clean Air Council.](#)

Ban Fracking on Public Lands

Update: U.S. Representative Mark Pocan re-introduced the bill to ban fracking on public lands (Earth Day - 4/22/15).

Fracking has already caused serious damage to our public lands, particularly in the areas that serve to buffer America's most precious national parks and monuments. By the end of 2014, oil and gas companies had leases on over 34 million acres of public land, and over 200 million more acres are currently being targeted for drilling.

[Click here to sign Food & Water Watch's petition.](#)

Extracting Fossil Fuels from Your Portfolio

An updated guide to personal divestment and reinvestment

Sign up with Green Century Funds to have a guide emailed to you, so you can learn how to

industry and legal limitations on the information the EPA was able to demand.

[In an interview with The Huffington Post](#), EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy defended the study, arguing that it will be helpful to state oil and gas regulators. [Click here to watch the video interview.](#)

Although states are the main regulators of oil and gas development on private land, Congress [tasked the EPA](#) five years ago with [studying potential concerns](#) about the effect of fracking on drinking water.

"We're excited to put it out, because we do think it will be another lens for states to look at this issue," McCarthy said of the study. "They are the primary audience for this. And let me explain to you why. States really are the primary regulator of water supplies. And they have been individually looking at the issues of hydrofracking because they care about their water supplies."

[Click here to read more from the Huffington Post.](#)

Banff Mountain Film Festival

The Moshannon Chapter of the Sierra Club hosted the 2014/15 Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour a couple weeks ago in State College. The theater was jam-packed as it sold out both nights. It was lovely to be whisked away on so many different adventures through the camera's lense. Big thanks to the Moshannon Group for putting on such an inspiring event. Thank you also to our newly signed-up e-newsletter recipients & welcome to the RDA mailing list!

For those of you who missed the film fest, here's a nice long trailer to give you a taste of what it's all about:

[2014/2015 Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour \(Canada/USA\)](#)

2014/2015 Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour (Canada/USA)

[Click here for more information on the Banff Centre and Festival.](#)

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Prioritize Renewable Energy, Not Natural Gas

Right now, the EPA is finalizing limits on global warming emissions from power plants, the largest source of these emissions in the United States. The EPA's Clean Power Plan is our best opportunity to curb the growing consequences of climate change and accelerate the growth of clean energy—but it's not strong enough. The draft plan relies heavily on a switch from coal to natural gas and underestimates the power of renewable energy, such as wind and solar, to help cut power plant carbon emissions.

New analysis from the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) underscores the costly and complex risks of over-relying on natural gas for electricity and the economic and environmental benefits of more renewable energy and energy efficiency. [Click here to read their full report.](#)

Natural gas is still a fossil fuel and dramatically expanding its use poses risks to the climate and our economy. A smarter path forward is to take greater advantage of cost-effective renewable energy.

[Click here to sign this petition to the EPA prepared by UCS.](#)

Join RDA!

Sign Up/Make a Donation

We welcome your active participation and are in need of help for special events, publicity, research and other projects.

As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, RDA relies on donations for the important work we do. In order for RDA to continue its valuable education and advocacy outreach in 2015, please consider a tax-free contribution to our efforts.

You can send a donation to the address listed at the bottom of this email, [click here to donate via PayPal](#), or [click here to download our current membership form](#) to fill out and send in along with your

donation.

Membership levels:
Adventurer.....\$10
Explorer.....\$20
Woodlander.....\$50
Guardian.....\$100
Naturalist.....\$500
Preservationist.....\$1,000

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Please note: The RDA newsletter includes reporting on a variety of events and activities, which do not necessarily reflect the philosophy of the organization. RDA practices only non-violent action in voicing the organization's beliefs and concerns.

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