

Conservation Committee Report

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The Conservation Pledge

I give my pledge as an American to save and faithfully defend from waste, the natural resources of my country; the soil, the water, the air, the minerals, the plant life and the wildlife.

This is my Pledge!

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EPA Identifies Case Studies for Hydraulic Fracturing Study

Agency to conduct field work in various regions of the country starting this summer

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today, in keeping with the administration's focus to ensure that the agency leverages domestic resources safely and responsibly, announced the next steps in its congressionally mandated hydraulic fracturing study. EPA has identified seven case studies to help inform the assessment of potential impacts of hy-

draulic fracturing on drinking water resources. The sites identified were selected following extensive input from stakeholders, including the public, local and state officials, industry, and environmental organizations. To ensure the agency maintains the current timeline for the study, the EPA will begin field work in some of the selected regions this summer.

Natural gas plays a key role in the nation's energy future. EPA is working closely with

other federal partners to ensure that this important resource can be developed safely.

"This is an important part of a process that will use the best science to help us better understand the potential impacts of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water," said Paul Anastas, Assistant Administrator for EPA's Office of Research and Development. "We've met with community members, state experts and industry and

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Feds Launch Action Plan to Protect People and Families from Radon

Radon is one of the leading causes of lung cancer

U.S Environmental Protection Agency, the General Services Administration, and the

departments of Agriculture, Defense, Energy, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, and Veterans Affairs have

joined forces to help save lives and create healthier home and school environments for America's families. The plan brings

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EPA Identifies Case Studies for Hydraulic Fracturing Study

environmental leaders to choose these case studies. This is about using the best possible science to do what the American people expect the EPA to do -- ensure that the health of their communities and families are protected.”

The studies, which will take place in regions across the country, will be broken into two study groups. Two of the seven sites were selected as prospective case studies where EPA will monitor key aspects of the hy-

draulic fracturing process throughout the lifecycle of a well.

These areas are located in:
Haynesville Shale - DeSoto Parish, La.
Marcellus Shale - Washington County, Pa.

Five retrospective case studies were selected and will examine areas where hydraulic fracturing has occurred for any impact on drinking water resources. These

are located in:

Bakken Shale - Kildeer, and Dunn Counties, N.D.
Barnett Shale - Wise and Denton Counties, Texas
Marcellus Shale - Bradford and Susquehanna Counties, Pa.
Marcellus Shale - Washington County, Pa.
Raton Basin - Las Animas County, Colo.

The information gathered from these case studies will be part of

an approach which includes literature review, collection of data and information from states, industry and communities, laboratory work and computer modeling. The combination of these materials will allow us to do a more comprehensive assessment of the potential impacts of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water resources. The study will continue to use the best available science, independent sources of

information, and will be conducted using a transparent, peer-reviewed process, to better understand any impacts associated with hydraulic fracturing.

EPA invited stakeholders from across the country to participate in the identification of potential case studies through informational public meetings and the submission of electronic or written comments. Following thou-

sands of comments, over 40 case studies were nominated for inclusion in the study. The case studies were identified, prioritized and selected based on a rigorous set of criteria. These criteria included proximity of population and drinking water supplies to activities, concerns about impaired water quality (retrospective only) and health and environmental impacts (retrospective only), and knowl-

edge gaps that could be filled by the case study. Sites were prioritized based on geographic and geologic diversity, population at risk, site status (planned, active or completed), unique geological or hydrology features, characteristics of water resources, and land use.

The draft study plan and addi-

tional information:

<http://www.epa.gov/hydraulicfracturing>

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency



Feds Launch Action Plan to Protect People and Families from Radon

together commitments that help to reduce exposure to radon and protect the health of Americans through leveraging and advancing existing state, local, and national programs. Radon exposure is the leading cause of non-smoking lung cancer and leads to an estimated 21,000 deaths each year.

“With nearly one in 15 homes affected by elevated levels of radon and thousands dying each year from radon-induced cancer,

it’s time to step up our actions in the federal government,” EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson said. “Through the Federal Radon Action Plan, we’re working with partner agencies to raise awareness about the threat of radon in our homes and to take steps to mitigate this hazard. Together our efforts will help reduce radon exposure and make our homes, schools and communities healthier places to live, learn, work and play.”

The Federal Radon Action Plan brings together government agencies to demonstrate the importance of radon risk reduction, address finance and incentive issues to drive testing and mitigation, and build demand for services from industry professionals. The plan will help spur greater action in the marketplace, create jobs in the private sector, and significantly reduce exposure to radon. The plan includes strategies to reach low-income families, many of whom

do not have the resources to make the simple fixes necessary to protect their homes and loved ones. With the help of all agency networks, approximately 7.5 million buildings and homes in the United States will be able to receive information and build awareness around this serious public health risk.

The plan includes federal gov-

ernment actions to reduce radon risks:

- Launching a cross-government outreach initiative to educate families about the health risks associated with radon exposure and the solutions to address the risks.

- Incorporating radon testing and mitigation into federal programs.
- Investing in new standards and updating codes for measurement and mitigation in schools, daycare facilities, and multi-family housing.
- Establishing incentives that drive testing

and mitigation in the private and public sectors.

Radon is a naturally occurring, invisible and odorless radioactive gas. Approximately one in 15 American homes contain high levels of radon. Millions of Americans are unknowingly exposed to this dangerous gas.

EPA and the Surgeon General urge people to test their homes for radon at least every two years. Contact your state radon office for information on locating qualified test kits or qualified radon testers.

Information on the Federal Radon Action Plan:

http://www.epa.gov/radon/action_plan.html

Information on radon and testing your home:
<http://www.epa.gov/radon/index.html>

source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

EPA Proposes Safeguards for Hazardous Waste Recycling

Action aims to promote economic, environmental and public health benefits of waste recycling

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing new safeguards for recycling hazardous materials to protect public health and the environment. Today's proposal modifies EPA's 2008 Definition of Solid Waste (DSW) rule, which revised hazardous waste regulations to encourage recycling of

hazardous materials. Today's proposal will improve accountability and oversight of hazardous materials recycling, while allowing for important flexibilities that will promote its economic and environmental benefits. EPA is opening up this proposal for public comment.

EPA is also releasing for public comment its draft expanded environmental justice analysis of the 2008 DSW final rule, which evaluates the rule's potential im-

pact on low-income and minority communities. EPA is also requesting public comment on the environmental justice analysis as well as on suggested changes received from peer review. The analysis and peer review comments will be available in the docket for this rulemaking once the proposal is published.

"Safe recycling of hazardous materials conserves vital resources while protecting the environmental and economic health of

our communities," said Mathy Stanislaus, assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response. "Today's proposed enhancements show EPA's commitment to achieving sustainable materials management through increased recycling, while retaining safeguards to protect vulnerable communities and the environment."

EPA's re-examination of the 2008 DSW final rule identified areas in the regulations that could be improved to better protect public health and the environment with a particular focus on adjacent communities by ensuring better management of hazardous waste. Today's proposal includes provisions to address those areas through increased transparency and oversight and accountability for haz-

ardous materials recycling. Facilities that recycle onsite or within the same company under the reduced regulatory requirements retained under the proposal would be subject to enhanced storage and recordkeeping requirements as compared to the 2008 rule. Companies that send their hazardous materials offsite for recycling would have tailored storage standards, while being required to send their ma-

terials to a permitted hazardous waste recycling facility. The proposed rule also creates a level playing field by requiring all forms of hazardous waste recycling to meet requirements designed to ensure materials are legitimately recycled and not being disposed of illegally.

EPA will accept comment on

this proposal for 60 days after publication in the Federal Register. The docket for the rulemaking is EPA-HQ-RCRA-2010-0742 and can be accessed at <http://www.regulations.gov> once the proposal is published.

More information about this rulemaking:

<http://www.epa.gov/waste/hazard/dsw/rulemaking.htm>

Source: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

EPA Approves Two Insecticides for Control of Invasive Stink Bug

On June 24, 2011, EPA approved, for emergency use, the insecticide dinotefuran (trade names Venom and Scorpion) on tree fruit to help manage populations of the brown marmorated stink bug, an invasive insect that has caused extensive yield losses in tree fruit production in the mid-Atlantic region. The approval, known as an emergency exemption, applies to Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, West Vir-

ginia, North Carolina and New Jersey. Under the exemption, producers of stone fruit (such as peaches, plums and cherries) and pome fruit (including apples and pears) are allowed to manage the brown marmorated stink bug with two applications of dinotefuran by ground equipment per season.

“EPA is very concerned about the impact of stink bugs on agricultural production and will continue to monitor the problem and

provide growers safe and effective tools to help manage this pest,” said Steve Owens, assistant administrator of EPA’s Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. “We are committed to continuing to work closely with the agricultural community to address this very serious problem.”

Under the emergency exemption provision of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, states can peti-

tion EPA for the use of an unregistered pesticide on a temporary basis if it will help alleviate an emergency pest problem. Before approval, EPA must be able to support the use from a health and safety standpoint. EPA has assessed the risks of the exemption involving dinotefuran and has made a safety finding for the use. Dinotefuran is already approved for use on leafy vegetables.

Also, on June 21, 2011 EPA approved an additional use for an insecticide that may help manage stink bugs in organic production systems. The new product contains azadirachtin and pyrethrins, which are derived from botanical ingredients. This product is now approved for use on many crops where stink bug management is needed, and it can be used by organic farmers.

EPA continues to work with Congress, USDA, lead state agencies, various federal research agencies, universities, private companies and growers, in an effort to develop a sustainable pest-management tool box to manage brown marmorated stink bugs.



For more information:

www.epa.gov/pesticides

For information about EPA’s work with the agriculture community:

www.epa.gov/agriculture/

Contact: U.S. EPA

Marcellus Shale Commission Issues Final Report

Lt. Governor Jim Cawley today released the final report of the Marcellus Shale Advisory Commission, taking the first step toward developing a comprehensive and strategic plan for responsible natural gas drilling in Pennsylvania.

The unanimously-adopted report contains 96 policy recommendations that include tougher regulations for drilling, doubling fines for violations, creating jobs in related industries and promoting the use of natural gas vehicles.

“Today, Pennsylvania is taking an important, first step toward creating tens of thousands of jobs and leading the nation toward energy independence and doing so in an environmentally responsible way,” said Cawley.

Some of the key recommendations the panel made to Governor Corbett include:

- Increasing the distance between gas well sites and streams, private wells and public water systems.

- Posting more information online

for the public.

- Tougher civil and criminal penalties for violators.

- Assisting PA companies to do business with natural gas industry.

- Training Pennsylvanians to work in the industry.

- Developing “Green Corridors” for vehicles powered by natural gas.

“This commission brought the industry, environmental groups and local government leaders together to the same table where

we methodically and publicly worked out these comprehensive recommendations,” said Cawley.

Governor Corbett formed the 30-member commission in March, giving them 120 days to develop recommendations on all aspects of natural gas drilling. The commission held 21 public meetings, heard 60 expert presentations and reviewed more than 650

emails and letters from the public.

To see a copy of the report or for more information, visit:

http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/marcellus_shale_advisory_commission/20074.

Source: PA DEP

Inside Story Headline

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