

Publications

Oil and Gas Alert: Anti-Frackers Disappointed in Water Contamination Study

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CLIENT ALERT | 2.17.2016

Energy and production companies seeking to develop an unconventional natural gas well site in Western Pennsylvania undoubtedly are familiar with the local zoning ordinance and well permit challenges being brought by those opposed to hydraulic fracturing. During the hearings before municipal zoning boards and Pennsylvania trial courts, these challengers have offered purported evidence and expert testimony related to the alleged harmful effects of hydraulic fracturing. However, a new study from the University of Cincinnati undermines such assertions.

Funded by several anti-fracking foundations, including the Deal Creek Foundation and the Alice Weston Foundation, the three-year study failed to identify a causal link between hydraulic fracturing and environmental damage. In fact, the researchers failed to discover any significant increase in methane concentration. The study, which was announced at a recent anti-fracking public meeting hosted by Carroll County Concerned Citizens, found that all of the applicable samples fell within the clean water range and those samples resulting in a high methane content *did not* have a natural gas source.

Although environmental groups previously praised the ongoing study, their hypocrisy was evidenced when the lead researcher announced disappointment in the results: "[T]hey were hoping our data could point to a reason to ban it." [Click here](#) for an article covering the study's announcement.

Over the previous five years, the attorneys of the Vorys energy practice group have been challenging organizations, such as the Delaware Riverkeeper Network and Clean Air Council, in their efforts to propagate the alleged harmful effects of hydraulic fracturing. These attorneys remain committed to aggressively representing our energy clients and successfully defending future challenges to natural gas well pad development. For additional information, please contact Michael K. Vennum in the Vorys Pittsburgh office at 412.904.7712.