



December 10, 2018

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CERTIFIED MAIL NO. [REDACTED]

Re: Water Supply Request for Investigation ID: 331945
58 Pa.C.S. § 3218 Determination
Ridgebury Township, Bradford County

Dear [REDACTED]

The Department of Environmental Protection (Department) has been investigating the possible degradation of your water supply located at the above referenced subject address (“Water Supply”), in response to a complaint received on January 22, 2018, that recent oil and gas activities may have affected your Water Supply. The Department’s investigation, prompted by information you provided, has determined that your Water Supply was adversely affected by oil and gas activities, including but not limited to the drilling, alteration, or operation of an oil or gas well. The information upon which this determination is based is summarized below.

Summary of Investigation

On January 22, 2018, the Department was notified regarding black/gray discoloration, malodor, and effervescence in the water supply. The Department conducted sampling of your Water Supply on January 25, 2018. The Department’s sample results indicated methane was present in your Water Supply at concentrations above Department action levels, and also above the concentration detected in a pre-drill sample collected on November 19, 2010. The Department collected additional samples from your Water Supply on April 23, 2018 and May 23, 2018. Methane levels were also elevated during those sampling events. The Department’s samples were collected as shown in the enclosed table, and submitted to the Department’s laboratory in Harrisburg for analysis. The attached sample results table shows that the following analytes exceeded Department standards during one or more of the sampling events: iron, manganese, and turbidity. Note that Primary Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) are intended to reflect potential dangers to human health, while Secondary Maximum Contaminant Levels (SMCLs) reflect the aesthetics of the water (i.e. taste, smell, etc.).

CID 331945 WS Exceedances and Bacteria Detections					
Results in mg/l unless otherwise noted.	Pre-Drill Sample 11/19/2010 10113322-001	DEP Sample 1/25/2018 0973-183, 184, 185, & 186	DEP Sample 4/23/2018 3243-348 & 349	DEP Sample 5/23/2018 3243-376 & 377	MCL (mg/l) * Denotes Primary MCL
Iron	0.50	5.02	5.31	3.43	0.3
Manganese	0.388	0.394	0.369	0.386	0.05
Turbidity	3.4 NTU	38.37 NTU	3.475 NTU	32.9 NTU	*1 NTU
Iron-reducing bacteria	-	25 cfu/ml	9,000 cfu/mL	2200 cfu/mL	No Standard
Slime-forming bacteria	-	500 cfu/ml	500 cfu/mL	2,500 cfu/mL	No Standard
Total coliforms	-	<1/100 ml	<1/100 mL	6/100 mL	*1/100 ml
Methane	0.0043	9.43	11.4	13.8	**7

** 7 mg/L represents the Department's unofficial action level for dissolved methane in groundwater.

BOID = Exceeds Standard

The post-complaint laboratory analytical results from your water supply indicated dissolved methane concentrations ranging from 9.43 mg/L to 13.8 mg/L in the samples collected by the Department.

Samples of the methane from the Water Supply were collected and sent to a specialized laboratory for isotopic and compositional analysis. These analyses allowed for a more detailed characterization of gas present in the Water Supply. The results are attached for your records. The water quality analysis, isotope and compositional analyses, and increase in concentration of dissolved methane indicate that the stray gas in your Water Supply is most likely associated with oil and gas activities.

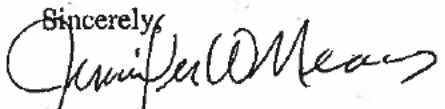
Methane is the predominant component of natural gas. Federal water standard limitations have not been established for methane gas. The level of concern begins above 28 mg/l methane, which is referred to as the saturation level. At this level, under normal atmospheric pressure, the water cannot hold additional methane in solution. This may allow the gas to come out of the water and concentrate in the air space of your home or building. There is a physical danger of fire or explosion due to the migration of natural gas into water wells or through soils into dwellings where it could be ignited by sources that are present in most homes/buildings. Natural gas can also cause a threat of asphyxiation, although this is extremely rare.

When the Department is made aware of methane levels greater than 7 mg/l, we notify the water supply owner of the hazards associated with methane in their water supply. Please be aware however, that the methane levels can fluctuate. This means that even with a relatively low level of methane, you should be vigilant of changes in your water that could indicate an increase in methane concentration.

It is the Department's recommendation that all water wells should be equipped with a working vent. This will help alleviate the possibility of concentrating these gases in areas where ignition would pose a threat to life or property. Please note that it is not possible to completely eliminate the hazards of having natural gas in your water supply by simply venting your well.

The Department is continuing to work to permanently resolve this issue. Should you have any questions regarding the investigation, please contact Caleb Woolever at 570-327-0546.

Sincerely,



Jennifer W. Means
Environmental Program Manager
Eastern Oil and Gas District

Enclosures:

Laboratory Analytical Results Table

cc:

Stephanie Wharton (email)
Caleb Woolever (email)
Matt Nuss (email)
Complaint File # 331945