

# Fracking Permanently Banned in the Delaware River Basin

Thank you for supporting us in the past. The Delaware River Basin fracking ban is a historic event. It is time for the Susquehanna River Basin Commission to follow suit.

Dear <<Household Informal Name>>,

Pennsylvanians want our elected officials to act on climate change. A recent poll found that 73% of Pennsylvania voters are concerned about the impacts of climate change on their children and grandchildren. It is time that Pennsylvania's elected leaders pay attention to the concerns of constituents like you and move Pennsylvania away from its traditional role of being one of America's biggest fossil fuel states. The future for Pennsylvania lies with a smooth transition to the green economy—cleaner energy, job creation and meeting our urgent greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Pennsylvania gets its gas mostly through hydraulic fracking, a modern technique used to extract natural gas or oil from shale and tight rock formations using a chemical cocktail—large quantities of water, undisclosed chemicals, and sand—to crack rock formations and release the gas and oil to the surface. There is increasing information on the negative health impacts to residents living near gas infrastructure. The Council is the lead environmental health organization in Pennsylvania advocating for community members affected by fracking across the state—whether it's pipeline safety, petrochemical buildouts, drinking water contamination, or threats to public health.

A new report from Environmental Health News studied families—including a Council staffer and her family—living in fracking country in Western Pennsylvania and tested them for harmful chemicals; the test revealed elevated levels of toxins in their bodies.

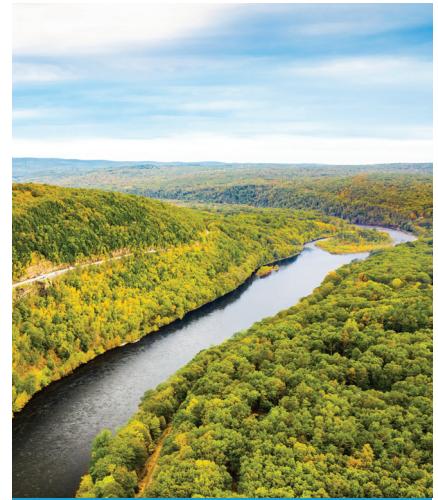
Scientists have clear evidence that fracking harms the air and water of nearby residents. The Council continues to call for a statewide fracking ban, which is a challenge given the state legislature's strong support of the gas industry and the fracking industry's aggressive lobbying.

There is progress. The public celebrated a monumental victory for clean water and public health when the Delaware River Basin Commission—an interstate agency responsible for safeguarding the water quality of the Delaware River—permanently banned fracking in the Delaware River Basin. The Delaware River Basin provides clean drinking water for 15 million people. The resources of the Basin are critical for public health, recreational use, and our economy.

The environmental community pushed hard for ten years before the Commission first proposed the total fracking ban. In February of this year, all four basin states—



[www.cleanair.org](http://www.cleanair.org)



PENNSYLVANIANS  
WANT OUR  
ELECTED OFFICIALS  
TO ACT ON  
CLIMATE CHANGE.

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of Pennsylvania voters are concerned about the impacts of climate change on their children and grandchildren.

The future for Pennsylvania lies with a smooth transition to the green economy—cleaner energy, job creation and meeting our urgent greenhouse gas reduction goals.

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Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and New York—voted to ban drilling activities, citing scientific evidence that fracking has polluted drinking water, surface water, and groundwater, causing grave public health concerns. The Clean Air Council and other groups fought hard to make this a reality by submitting public comments, giving testimony, attending meetings, and mobilizing members like you to protect communities living in the watershed and its natural resources.

The Delaware River Basin fracking ban is a historic event. It is time for the Susquehanna River Basin Commission to follow suit. Banning fracking not only places public health above the fracking industry's profits, it also marks a commitment to curb climate pollution and meet Pennsylvania's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2050.

While many people know that the fracking industry pollutes the air and water, a lesser-known aspect of the process is how the industry handles and recirculates the toxic liquids fracking generates, aka fracking waste. When drilling a gas well, several different types of waste liquids need to be disposed of that are noxious and are known to contaminate surface or groundwater. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) allows gas companies to collect this waste in tanks and then process and reuse it. Though DEP calls this "beneficial use," the liquid wastes are used to frack more wells, and there is nothing beneficial about that. These dirty operations spill their toxic waste at times and rack up violations.

**Fracking waste storage sites are some of the dirtiest operations around.**

Recently, the Council fought and won to make sure you can comment on how fracking waste is handled. The Council and other environmental groups challenged PADEP's renewal of general permits authorizing fracking waste storage and processing facilities. PADEP was not going to give the public an opportunity to share their concerns for any of the dozens of facilities, but the Council reached a settlement whereby PADEP opened up 60-day comment periods, till May 19, 2021, on fracking waste storage and facilities. PADEP should make modifications to the permits based on those comments.

The Council is proud to have been a key part of the effort to ensure that the fracking industry didn't get a pass due to PADEP's mistake, but we're not done yet: we appealed six of those dozens of permits, and legislators in Harrisburg have introduced a bill to legalize dumping of fracking wastewater, so there's more fight to come.

The Council leads the way in fighting to protect communities from the Mariner East pipelines, the PennEast pipeline, and the Adelphia Gateway pipelines, in addition to fighting more than ten other gas-related projects in the region. Litigation is always resource intensive and costly.

We sincerely thank you for your support on this challenging work.



Joseph Otis Minott, Esq.  
Executive Director and Chief Counsel

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