

Action Alert

Colorado Proposing New Oil & Gas Rules – Attend a Meeting Near You in January; Support New Rules that Protect Public Health & Wildlife!

The Colorado Oil & Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC) will hold public meetings beginning January 3rd and take written comment on new proposed oil and gas regulations. This rulemaking effort stems from legislation passed in 2007 requiring the COGCC to write new rules, in coordination with the Colorado Department of Health and the Division of Wildlife, to protect public health and wildlife during oil and gas operations (HB 1341 and HB 1298). The State's proposal is in its early stages, but agencies are required by law to draft regulations and complete this process by July 2008. This train is moving quickly and this is a huge opportunity to secure critical new protections for public health and wildlife. It is very important that the COGCC receive your input on how best to protect public health and wildlife!

The COGCC has released a pre-draft rulemaking proposal. You can view this proposal and find current postings regarding public meetings and stakeholder groups at <http://oil-gas.state.co.us/RuleMaking/2007RuleMaking.cfm>

Get Involved Now!! You can help by:

- Attending the Public Hearings in January in one or more of the following locations: Parachute, Greeley, Wray, Durango or Trinidad. See the meeting schedule and suggested talking points below. Meetings will be held January 3rd through January 18th.
- Submitting written comments. COGCC will take written comments but it is imperative that individuals turn out to the public meetings and make their voices heard in person as well. Submit written comments online or to the address below. Feel free to use the suggested talking points, but be sure to personalize these comments by describing where you live, how oil and gas impacts you and why the State should act now to implement protective public health & wildlife rules.

Submit comments to -- COGCC Rulemaking; c/o Department of Natural Resources; 1313 Sherman St., Rm 718; Denver, CO 80203 or

email comments to: dnr.ogcc@state.co.us or submit comments on-line at: <http://oil-gas.state.co.us/RuleMaking/Comments/Comment.cfm>

Talking Points

Tell the COGCC that new rules must:

Require full disclosure of all chemicals used in oil and gas production. Industry should be required to make public the full chemical make-up of their products including the volumes and concentrations of the chemicals used during oil and gas operations.

Many Coloradoans live near drill rigs, well pads, pits, intense oil-field traffic and a variety of other exploration and production facilities.

Without mandatory and full disclosure of chemicals used in drilling, stimulation, completion and other products, residents have no way of knowing what kind of chemicals they may be exposed to in their air, soil or water. Chemicals can enter the environment from drilling practices and through spills and accidents. Coloradoans deserve to know what the industry is using.

Collect data, initiate health studies, monitor air, water and soil, and establish advisory committees in a manner that is designed to prevent health impacts from oil and gas development, not simply “review available literature and assess the need for follow-up studies.” Currently, little specific data exists regarding the long-term health risks associated with oil and gas field chemicals and activities. Yet, those of us living with oil and gas development know that the industry is releasing hazardous chemicals in our air, water and soil. We ought to take a cumulative and precautionary approach to the health effects of oil and gas development, by conducting the appropriate studies and monitoring activities now.

Include local governments, surface owners and adjacent property owners in the consultation process and do so by preserving local authority to regulate oil and gas impacts. Local governments can play a critical role in ensuring that oil and gas development is done right. New rules must ensure that consultation requirements for local government, surface owners and adjacent landowners are strengthened and respect any stronger notice and consultation requirements that local governments may already have in place.

Prevent and reduce oil and gas impacts by requiring Comprehensive Development Plans, closed loop/pitless drilling

systems, greater setback from homes and other domestic/public structures, and greater attention to noise issues, and prohibiting on-site burial of oil and gas waste,

Hold industry accountable by increasing bonding and reducing time frames for reclamation. Bonding should reflect the true cost of clean-up or reclamation so that surface owners and residents don't end up subsidizing those operators who abandon their well sites. Time frames for reclamation ought to be reduced and rules regarding the removal of equipment, supplies and waste materials removed from locations must be strengthened and enforced.