

PA Environment Digest

An Update On Environmental Issues In PA

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DRBC Chair Issues Statement On Commission's Delay In Adopting Drilling Rules

[Delaware River Basin Commission](#) Chair Michele Siekerka (NJ) [issued a statement](#) at the Commission's July 10 meeting responding to a variety of letters, including one [from Gov. Corbett](#) about the three year delay in adopting regulations covering Marcellus Shale drilling.

[In May 2010](#) the Commission imposed a moratorium on approving new permits for Marcellus drilling operations saying it was drafting new rules to cover the activity. A draft set of regulations were issued for public comment by DRBC [in December 2010](#). The Commission extended the comment period on the proposed rules [in March 2011](#).

A final draft set of rules were on the agenda for the Commission's November 2011, but action on them [was postponed indefinitely](#).

Commissioner Siekerka's statement follows--

"Let me address how the Commission has been moving the natural gas process forward. Since November 2011 DRBC staff and the collective staff of all of the signatory parties have spent thousands of hours:

- 1) reviewing new scientific studies released on the water resource impacts of natural gas drilling;
- 2) benchmarking new regulations, best management practices and performance standards adopted by states, federal agencies and organizations such as the Center for Sustainable Shale Development, a collaborative group that has brought environmental and energy interests together;
- 3) using these models to set a level of minimum standards -- a regulatory floor -- for natural gas development in the Delaware Basin that will protect the shared water resources on which all the basin states depend;
- 4) performing water quality and quantity monitoring to establish baseline conditions prior to the onset of natural gas development in the basin; and
- 5) with the help of a grant from the William Penn Foundation, developing a tool for evaluating the

impacts of land-based development on water resources, to facilitate informed planning and assess effects.

“I and my colleagues are continuing to confer in good faith and with forward momentum within and outside of our regularly scheduled business meetings to reach consensus on a path forward that provides for the development of a potentially valuable energy source while protecting the vital water resources within the Basin.”

For more information, visit DRBC’s [Natural Gas Drilling](#) webpage.

NewsClips:

[Landowners Disgruntled With Drillers’ Deductions](#)

[Landowners Threaten To Sue Over DRBC Inaction On Drilling](#)

[Pressure Mounts On DRBC Over Gas Drilling](#)