



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION

May 7, 2019

CERTIFIED MAIL NO. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Re: Request for Investigation 313247
Stray Gas Migrating into Water Supply – Positive Determination
Limestone Township, Clarion County

Dear [REDACTED]

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (Department) has been investigating the possible degradation of your water supply located at the above referenced address (“Water Supply”), in response to a complaint received on June 30, 2015. The Department 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 case information is summarized below.

CASE INFORMATION:

Date of Complaint	Nature of Complaint (odor, taste, quantity, use, color)	Pollution
June 30, 2015	Natural gas venting from water well	Free and dissolved natural gas in private water well

WATER SAMPLE RESULTS:

Parameter/Description	Statewide Standards or recommended levels	EQT Sample 3/4/2016	DEP Sample 3/24/2016	DEP Sample 3/29/2016 Bacteria, VOADW, UVIR only	DEP Sample 4/14/2016 Bacteria only	DEP Sample 5/17/2017	DEP Sample 5/22/2018	DEP Sample 9/27/2018
Alkalinity (mg/l)			53.4			64.0	57.4	45.4
Aluminum (ug/l)	200		<200			<200	<200	<200
Arsenic (ug/l)	10		<3.0			<3.0	<3.0	<3.0
Barium (mg/l)	2	0.613	0.413			0.443	0.297	0.417
Bromide (mg/l)			<.02			<0.2	<0.2	<0.2
Calcium (mg/l)		14.5	14.500			15.700	16.260	14.48

Hardness (mg/l)		51.5	52			54	56	51
Iron (mg/l)	0.3	4.34	3.40			4.469	4.792	10.070
Lithium (ug/l)			27.000			28.000	26.000	30.000
Magnesium (mg/l)		3.73	3.702			3.666	3.712	3.69
Manganese (mg/l)	0.05	0.418	0.387			0.360	0.381	0.191
pH	6.5-8.5	7.15	7.4			7.6	6.7	6.9
Potassium (mg/l)			2.275			2.490	2.406	2.39
Selenium (ug/l)	50		<7			<7	<7	<7
Sodium (mg/l)		10.2	5.370			7.848	6.362	11.48
Conductivity (umhos/cm)		157	129.90			134.80	149.70	164.40
Strontium (mg/l)			0.08			0.08	0.067	0.089
Chloride (mg/l)	250	8.47	2.57			4.52	5.97	7.96
TDS (mg/l)	500	130	74			78	100	98
Sulfate (mg/l)	250	5.60	8.64			<1.00	10.51	21.75
TSS (mg/l)		5	<5			8	<5	8
Turbidity (ntu)		5.39	12.49			14.64	6.94	19.70
Zinc (ug/l)	500		<10.0			10.00	28.00	17.00
Methylene Blue Active Substances		<0.0250	NA					
Oil & Grease		<5.00	NA					
Ethane (mg/l)		1.49	2.520			5.060	0.0707	Not detected
Methane (mg/l)	7 (action level)	5.92	9.470			17.100	1.040	0.360
Propane (mg/l)			0.834			2.300	Not detected	Not detected
E. coli MPN			<1/100ml		<1/100ml			
Total Coliform MPN			<1/100ml	1/100ml	83/100ml			
Iron-related bacteria			500 cfu/ml	500 cfu/ml				
Sulfate-reducing bacteria			6000 cfu/ml	Not detected				
UV			NA	Present but no ID				
IR			NA	Present but no ID				

The Department's investigation was prompted by notification that natural gas was discovered in a neighboring water well during the cleanout of the well. The Department's investigation involved six private water supplies, twenty-six gas wells, and spanned over three years.

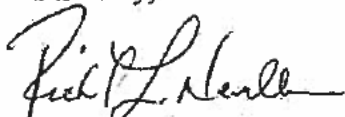
During the investigation, the Department identified four separate water wells that were venting natural gas. The Department monitored the four wells for natural gas throughout the investigation. Specifically, the Department collected and analyzed numerous water samples and gas samples. In addition, the Department collected and analyzed gas samples from several gas wells in the area and compared the results to those from the water wells. The gas sample results indicated that the natural gas entering the water wells is thermogenic and from the same source as the natural gas in nearby gas wells. Multiple gas wells were vented, plugged, and repaired during the investigation.

Based on the isotopic analysis of the gas collected from the water supplies and gas wells, water sample results, monitoring results from the headspace of water wells, and the sequence of plugging and repairs made to gas wells, the Department has determined that the four water supplies were impacted by oil and gas activity, and that the plugging and repairs to gas wells during the investigation eliminated most of the natural gas from the water supplies.

Dissolved methane gas was detected in your water well and ranged from 0.36 mg/l to 17.10 mg/l. Free gas levels in the Water Supply ranged from zero to 100% by volume. The latest measured dissolved methane level was 0.36 mg/l. This level should continue to decrease. In addition, the Department will continue to address oil and gas wells in the area of investigation that are not in compliance with regulatory requirements. The Department also recommends that your water well continue to be equipped with a working vent.

During DEP's investigation, several water samples were collected from your water supply. The sample results indicate that your water quality exceeds health and/or aesthetic statewide standards for iron and manganese. Iron and manganese are metals that are commonly found in private water systems throughout Pennsylvania, however, they are most common in northern and western counties (PennState Extension Iron and Manganese in Private Water Systems). The most likely source of these elevated parameters is the coal seam(s) and other types of rock encountered by the wellbore of the Water Supply. If you have any questions about any of the above, please contact Aaron O'Hara at 814-332-6199.

Sincerely,



Richard L. Neville
Northwest District Oil and Gas Manager
District Oil and Gas Operations

c: Joe Lichtinger (email)
Steve Lencer (email)
Dave Adams (email)
Chad Meyer (email)
Ruth Taylor (email)
Michael Braymer (email)
Kayla Despenes (email)
File through Aaron O'Hara