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Portage Group of Concerned Citizens Testifies in State Hearing on new Emergency Underground Injection Well Rules

Members of Concerned Citizens Ohio will travel to the Columbus area to testify in the public comment hearing August 15, 2012 (9 a.m., Commerce Building East, 6606 Tussing Road, Reynoldsburg OH 43068) on the Emergency Rules on permitting and operation of Class II Injection wells. The Emergency Changes in rules are the result of the study of seismic events around the Northstar #1 Class II Injection Well in the Youngstown area, in late 2011.

This hearing will only allow comments on limited sections of the Class II injection well rules---related to permitting, tests of proposed , allowable injection pressure, shut-off valves and monitoring. However, Concerned Citizens Ohio (along with NEOGAP, Buckeye Forest Council and Center for Health, Environment and Justice) finds that there are many deficiencies in Ohio's Oil and Gas Rules: For example, Class II wells are designated as "brine" injection wells, but the waste fluids from deep shale horizontal "fracked" drilling are known to contain toxic chemicals and levels of radioactive radium hundreds of times the level of safe drinking water.

Concerned Citizens Ohio is a local grassroots group, based largely in Portage and surrounding counties, but networked with similar groups across the state. Four members of the group will carry with them comments from 20 other members, specific to the new rules; which, for example, as written, give the Chief of the Division of Mineral Resources and Management complete discretion as to which tests he requires and whether he determines that public objections are "relevant to the issues of public health or safety, or to good conservation practices." The new rules also prejudicially discriminate non-urban from urban areas in their requirements.