

Athens County Commissioners



Charlie Adkins
cadkins@athensoh.org
Chris Chmiel
cchmiel@athensoh.org
Lenny Eliason, MPA
leliason@athensoh.org

15 South Court St.
Athens, Ohio 45701
(740) 592-3219
Visit us at our website:
co.athensoh.org

JoAnn Rockhold
Clerk/Admin. Assistant
jsikorski@athensoh.org
Telephone (740) 592-3292
Fax (740) 594-8010

RESOLUTION OPPOSING OIL AND GAS BRINE SPREADING ON PUBLIC ROADS

Whereas; Athens County Commissioners are aware of Ohio Department of Natural Resources tests confirming dangerously high levels of radium 226 & 228 in “brine” from conventional as well as unconventional oil and gas production wells; and

Whereas; “brine” is used on some Ohio roads as a deicer and dust suppressant, where it gets into soil, can be tracked into homes, can become airborne as radioactive dust, and can contaminate drinking water sources and agricultural products; and

Whereas; local government approvals for use of “brine” on their roads and Ohio law authorizes multiple applications of “brine” per roadway and do not have an expiration date, with no testing of radioactivity required for the specific batch of oil or gas “brine” used, or any testing required for naturally occurring radioactive materials, and there are no provisions for follow-up monitoring for levels of toxicity or radioactive elements in soil, water or air; and

Whereas; we have been told over and over that” brine” spreading is safe because it comes from waste produced by conventional wells rather than from unconventional horizontal wells, but, as we suspected all along, this assumption is false: Waste from conventional wells can be highly radioactive; and

Whereas; we know these facts are true based on recent ODNR test results from data collected from conventional and unconventional well tests for radium 226 and radium 228, and limits for discharge and limits for drinking water are set by Ohio law:

Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Oil and Gas Brine TEST RESULTS

Radioactive levels of radium 226 and 228 in brine from 151 oil & gas well samples. Well Type	# Wells Sampled	Results*
Conventional (vertical, shallow) wells, the old ‘mom & pop’ wells	118	66 to 9602 pCi/L**
Horizontal (deep) wells	25	173 to 3264 pCi/L
Out-of-state (brine disposed in OH)	8	54.6 to 9798 pCi/L

* Source: Tests completed for ODNR Radiation Safety Section, Div of Oil and Gas, cited in ODNR memos 1-23-18; 7-2-18.

** Picocuries: a measure of the intensity of radioactivity; pCi/L reflects the intensity of radioactivity per liter of water.



And, whereas: the Ohio Administrative Code sets the legal limit for *combined* Radium-226 and Radium-228 discharge to the environment at 120 pCi/L (OAC 3701:1-38-12, Appendix C, table II, and the US Environmental Protection Agency drinking water standard for combined Radium 226 and 228 is 5pCi/L (40 CFR 141.66), and

Whereas; the health-based exposure limits (from *Radioactive elements most commonly detected in drinking water Environmental Working Group Tap Water Database 2019* ewg.org/tapwater/reviewed-radiological.php) are even lower, as follows:

Element	Primary health concern	Detection level, in picocuries per liter	Health-based limits (based on one-in-a-million cancer risk)	National Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) in pCi/L	Cancer risk at legal limit
Radium-226 & -228	Bone cancer, other cancers	1	0.05 pCi/L	5 pCi/L for combined radium 226+228	7 cancer cases per 100,000 exposed

Whereas; the Athens County Commissioners recognize that clean water and air are essential for the life, prosperity, sustainability and health of the community and that damage to water resources and air thereby causes tangible loss to health, property and life of individuals, communities and ecosystems; and

Now therefore be it resolved:

That the Athens County Commissioners state our opposition to laws allowing the use of oil and gas waste” brine” and products made from this waste to be allowed to be used as deicing and dust suppressants on any public road due to known and unknown risks and potential harm to our community and respectfully request that Governor Mike DeWine and the Ohio State Legislature move swiftly to remove any and all laws allowing the use of oil and gas waste “brine” and any products made from this waste that allow its use as a deicer or dust suppressant on our roads and

The Clerk is directed that a copy of this resolution be sent to Ohio Governor Mike DeWine; the Athens County members of the Ohio General Assembly; Ohio Department of Natural Resources Director Mary Mertz; ODNR Oil and Gas Division Chief, Eric Vendel; Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Director Laurie Stevens,

Lenny Eliason

9/29/20

Chris Chmiel

Charlie Adkins