

## **DEP Statement on Franklin Forks Methane Migration Determination**

After a 16-month investigation, the Department of Environmental Protection has determined that high levels of methane found in three private water wells in Franklin Township, Susquehanna County, cannot be attributed to natural gas drilling activity in that geographical area. DEP's extensive investigation started in December 2011 and included evaluation of the nearest natural gas wells, isotopic testing and analysis of historical water data to determine the origin of the methane.

The testing included water samples taken from three private water wells to compare with samples taken from natural gas wells located nearby and with water samples taken from the spring and private water well at Salt Springs State Park, which historically contains naturally occurring methane. The spring is approximately one mile from the affected homes. The testing determined that the water samples taken from the private water wells contained gas of similar isotopic makeup to the gas in the water samples taken from Salt Springs State Park. Additionally, the water wells and spring exhibited similar water chemistry, including the constituent's barium, iron, total dissolved solids (TDS), chlorides, manganese and aluminum. DEP's testing also determined that the gas in the water samples taken from the private water wells was not of the same origin as the natural gas in the nearby gas wells.

Additionally, agency staff evaluated information from a nearby mobile home park public water supply file relating to the its abandonment of a water source in 1998 due to elevated levels of methane, chlorides and TDS. The mobile home park is located approximately 2.3 miles from Franklin Forks, and this water well exhibited similar water chemistry to that of the three residential water supplies being investigated.

The owners of the private water wells affected by this investigation have been notified of DEP's determination.

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