

ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

**COMMISSIONERS OF
ST. MARY'S COUNTY**



James R. Guy, President
Michael L. Hewitt, Commissioner
Tom Jarboe, Commissioner
Todd B. Morgan, Commissioner
John E. O'Connor, Commissioner

March 14, 2017

Senator Joan Carter Conway, Chair
Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Written Testimony for SB 740
Oil and Natural Gas - Hydraulic Fracturing - Prohibition
Heard on February 28, 2017 @ 1:00 p.m.

Dear Chairman Conway and Committee Members,

Please find enclosed an original letter from the Commissioners of St. Mary's County and twenty-five (25) copies of written testimony for SB 740 – Oil and Natural Gas – Hydraulic Fracturing which was heard on February 28, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. Please circulate a copy to each member. Thank you for your assistance in this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 301-475-4200 x*1350.

Sincerely,

Christine Fleming, M.A.
Administrative Assistant

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March 14, 2017

Senator Joan Carter Conway, Chair
Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: **SB 740**

Dear Chairman Conway:

On March 7, 2017 the Commissioners of St. Mary's County held a public forum in the Commissioners meeting room in Leonardtown. At the public forum, several St. Mary's County citizens voiced their opinion regarding SB 740 – Oil and Natural Gas – Hydraulic Fracturing – Prohibition.

During our business meeting of March 14, 2017, the Commissioners of St. Mary's County decided not to take a position on SB 740, instead leaving it to the State to decide.

Please find attached, the documents submitted by citizens of St. Mary's County with regard to SB 740, for your consideration.

Sincerely,
COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY

James R. Guy, President

CSMC/cf
T:All/Consent/2017/81

cc: Senator Stephen Waugh
Delegate Deborah Rey
Delegate Gerald Clark
Delegate Matthew Morgan
Commissioner Michael Hewitt
Commissioner Tom Jarboe
Commissioner Todd Morgan
Commissioner John O'Connor
Dr. Rebecca Bridgett, County Administrator
George Sparling, County Attorney

CSMC - CSMC public forum

From: Rosa Pinnola Hance <re.pinnola@gmail.com>
To: <randy.guy@stmarysmd.com>, <mike.hewitt@stmarysmd.com>, <tom.jarboe@stma...>
Date: 3/9/2017 7:48 AM
Subject: CSMC public forum
Attachments: CSMC forum Testimony R Hance.pdf; SoMDFrackingFactSheetshort.docx.pdf

Good morning,

I just wanted to write a note to thank you all for hosting such a nice public forum on Tuesday. I enjoyed the opportunity to speak with you all and look forward to learning more about your thoughts and position on the hydraulic fracturing issue.

I have attached a copy of my testimony for your perusal and another copy of the fact sheet that I passed out in case there were not enough to go around Tuesday.

Warm regards,
Rosa Hance

Good evening, My name is Rosa Hance. I am a resident of Great Mills and I am authorized to speak on behalf of the 534 members of the Southern Maryland Sierra Club. Thank you for allowing me to take the floor as their representative. I would like to speak on the subject of hydraulic fracturing, commonly called "fracking."

Fracking is a non-traditional method of gas extraction where a drill hole is turned to horizontal when it reaches the subterranean shale layer. Millions of gallons of chemically-laden water are injected with such violent speed that it fractures the bedrock, allowing the gas to escape. And what happens to the tons of chemically-infused water now mixed with the escaping methane and radioactive compounds from deep within the earth? Some simply remains in the ground where it can travel through the now fractured bedrock to contaminate the groundwater. The majority is forced back to the surface as horrendously contaminated wastewater. It is kept in surface holding ponds which leach into aquifers as well as contaminate any wildlife that may incidentally come upon it.

Fracking wastewater is so toxic that there is no way to filter or treat the water so that it's safe again. The exact chemical makeup of the fracking compound is proprietary to each company, so is excluded from environmental regulation that all other industries must follow. This is unacceptable. We face an uphill battle to restore the Bay and reverse the damage from decades of pollution; fracking would destroy all of those efforts and add a whole new element of uncertainty to our environment, public health, economy and cultural recreation. In states that already frack such as Oklahoma, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania, links have been made between fracking and an uptick in premature births, birth defects, and respiratory conditions. Earthquakes in areas where they were once unheard of are now commonplace.

Pro-Fracking advocates like to point to the relatively clean burn of natural gas. They like to ignore the hazardous process of gas extraction, the harmful nature of the industrial infrastructure, the release of toxic chemicals into the air, as well as the reintroduction of contaminated wastewater back into the earth. While proposed regulations may prevent reinjection in Maryland, there are only so many places where this wastewater can go as it is effectively permanently poisoned. It may be sent alongside gas shipments to the export terminal at Dominion Cove Point for disposal or may be trucked across the Potomac into Virginia to be re-injected; either way there is a risk of contamination of our shared aquifers and the greater Chesapeake watershed.

What does this mean for St. Mary's County? We are the furthest county downstream of Potomac and Patuxent Rivers and the entire Chesapeake watershed. Anything that happens up river affects our lives. And while fracking may begin in Western Maryland, the Taylorsville and Delmarva gas basins run beneath Southern Maryland. If we do not put protections in place, our beautiful home could be marred by gas wells.

The effects of fracking could lead our local economy into disaster. How would farmers survive with contaminated groundwater, and how could watermen make a living with a poisoned bay

and rivers? Real estate values will decline with risk of well and septic contamination and the negative influence of industrial expansion. Testing and operations could be interrupted at Pax from frequent earthquakes. This is of course, not even including the rural heritage that is at risk if the rolling fields and pristine views of our country home are scarred by industrial takeover. This is already happening in Charles County, where even though the commissioners have banned fracking, gas companies plan to build a compressor station in Brandywine. Compressor stations are fully automated and do not generate jobs for the community.

What does this mean for the board of Commissioners? Maryland's current moratorium will expire in October, after which fracking can begin immediately. The Maryland State House *may* address this issue, there is a House of Delegates bill to ban fracking and two competing Senate bills, a full ban and one which the gas industry supports calling for another short term moratorium with county by county referenda. In a small, water-reliant state like Maryland, it is potentially disastrous for St. Mary's if even a single county is allowed to frack.

We must demonstrate our resolve on this issue in two ways: First: the commissioners should vote to pass a local ban against fracking and its infrastructure. Second, legislative District 29 has over 150 signatures supporting a state-wide ban. The board should send a letter to the General Assembly confirming our support for the full state-wide ban on fracking to encourage the State House to follow our lead.



Ban Fracking in Maryland

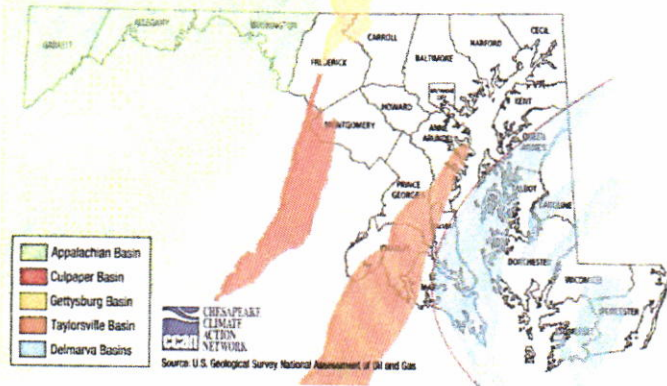


What is Fracking?

"Fracking" is shorthand for hydraulic fracturing.

After drilling down to a rock formation that holds oil or natural gas, and then drilling sideways through this targeted layer of rock, operators inject, under extreme pressure, millions of gallons of water mixed with sand and chemicals to fracture (or "frack") the rock and release the gas as well as other underground hazardous and radioactive materials. Then, most of the contaminated water comes back to the surface as toxic wastewater, where it is either left in wastewater "ponds," injected back into the Earth, or shipped away to other locations to do the same.

Maryland Gas Basins



What would fracking mean for Maryland?

- Contaminated Groundwater, Rivers and Bay
- Health Threatening Air Quality
- Climate Change- high methane release
- Drop in Real Estate Value
- Industrial Traffic
- Earthquakes

These are only some of the impacts that have been reported in neighboring Virginia, Pennsylvania and other states that currently frack.

Will Southern Maryland frack?

Many are unaware of the potential for fracking within our local communities. **In fact, Southern Maryland sits on top of 2 different gas basins**, as shown in the above map. In 2015, the Maryland General Assembly passed a 2.5 year moratorium to allow for health and environmental studies to take place to better evaluate the potential threats from fracking. Since then, several local jurisdictions have taken the initiative to protect their communities from fracking, including Charles, Anne Arundel, Montgomery and Prince George's counties, and western Maryland towns like Friendsville, Mountain Lake Park, and Frostburg. Citizens are organizing in communities across the state to protect their health, environment, and economy from this dangerous process. All of this is important because **without any additional action, and if fracking isn't banned in the 2017 MD Legislative Session, happening NOW, the state will be open to fracking in October of 2017.**



Transition to Renewables

If fracked gas isn't the answer, what is? To ensure the safety of all Americans, we must embrace a clean energy future. As we shift away from coal as a power source, we must pass up natural gas and invest in forms of clean energy that we know are safe, such as wind and solar, which have become the cheapest forms of energy. The wind industry supports 75,000 jobs across all 50 states, and supplies Iowa and South Dakota with nearly 25 percent of their electricity. Investing in clean energy will create good, local, and permanent jobs while protecting our air, water, and health.

The legislative session ends April 11th, which means we don't have much time. We need your help, so please contact me to find out how you can get involved- no experience necessary!

Southern Maryland Sierra Club Contact- Rosa E.P. Hance re.pinnola@gmail.com 240-808-4233



Ban Fracking in Maryland

Like us on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/somdsierraclub/



CSMC - NO Fracking in Maryland

From: Clay Myers <claymyers@earthlink.net>
To: <Csmc@stmarysmd.com>
Date: 3/8/2017 3:31 PM
Subject: NO Fracking in Maryland

or St Mary's County - please.

Vr,

Clay Myers
Leonardtown

Originally presented to ~~the~~

Feb. 28, 2017

SB 740: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee (in favor)
(Annapolis)

Testimony by Lili Sheeline, Port Republic, MD (Lili@LNF.com; Long & Foster Real Estate)

I have been a licensed Realtor in Maryland for 18 years. I'd like to address the impact of fracking on property values.

The oil & gas industry and other fracking proponents make the claim that fracking is good for the economy: it brings jobs, it puts money in your pocket. That's true, for some. But it is by no means a benefit for all, and it's only one side of the ledger.

As someone who has worked with home buyers and sellers for 18 years, I became concerned about how this industry impacts homeowners. What might the costs be to them? But unfortunately, the other side of the ledger – the costs – rarely seem to be a serious part of this conversation.

My real estate experience, and common sense, tell me that if a buyer were comparing two similar homes, and one was near a fracking site and the other was not, most buyers would choose the home *not* near the site – unless, of course, the price of the home near the fracking was a lot cheaper. Since this issue is rarely addressed, I did what any realtor should do regarding impacts on home values – I looked at the data. I want to share with you now just some of what I have found, which is that there is an emerging body of literature showing that fracking often has a net negative impact on property values.

Briefly, here are some of the highlights of the research literature. (Please note: when data-based objections to fracking are raised, I have often heard fracking proponents call this "fear mongering". However, please see the attached references; the actual research comes from respected academic and research institutions and publications.)

- In a Pennsylvania study, homes near fracking sites decreased in value by as much as 17%.¹
- In Ohio, studies looking at the impacts of petroleum-related pipeline releases (due to a lack of fracking data from the 1990s and 2000s) found that property values dropped as much as 27%.²
- A research survey asked communities in Florida and Texas to consider two home-buying scenarios that differed only in (a) proximity to fracking well site (one-quarter mile away vs. one mile away) and (b) whether or not the drilling site was visible from the home. It found that only 26% to 37% of respondents would even bid on the homes, and the offers they did bring were discounted as much as 25% (based on the scenarios and strength of market).³
- A National Association of Realtors' article also cited property values dropping by as much as 15%.⁴
- Some homeowners will benefit from fracking. However, in Pennsylvania researchers found that benefits generally occur only under certain conditions: the gas well is *producing*, the property served by piped public water, and the well not within view of the house. In contrast, properties where the drilling or fracturing stages are *underway*, or where wells were recently drilled, or where properties were simply in view of a well, did drop in value.⁵

Lili Sheeline

Submitted
to
St. Mary's
Public
Forum,
3/7/17

- Another study found that, in the aftermath of the oil & gas production boom out west in the 1970s and 1980s, incomes per capita decreased and unemployment payments increased relative to what they would have been had the boom not occurred.¹⁸

Also related to the question of property values are loans and insurance issues.

- Major national mortgage lenders have at times refused to make loans for properties near shale gas wells. One banking executive stated, "You could end up where someone puts a drilling platform on that property... We'd have to tell their neighbors, 'We're sorry, your property value just went down.'"¹⁹
- Insurance providers are also concerned. The Center for Insurance Policy and Research noted: "As the use of hydraulic fracturing to extract shale gas continues to proliferate, the insurance industry will become increasingly exposed to its related risks. Liability policies are likely to be most impacted."²⁰

On a personal note, I have experienced some of this myself in Calvert County. I have had buyers tell me they don't want to be anywhere near the Dominion Cove Point LNG facility. Thus, the pool of potential buyers shrinks.

Lastly, I want to specifically address home buyers and their concerns as they search for a new home. Home buyers do weigh such factors as health, safety, security, and a healthy environment. The National Association of Realtors stated in an article: "Today's ultra-health-conscious consumers want the assurance of safety and purity in the products they buy. For home buyers, environmental concerns center on potential hazards in or near the home. Is the drinking water safe? ...Are there hazards nearby that could ultimately affect the value of the house?"²¹

Radon, in particular, is a concern for homebuyers. Homebuyers regularly include radon contingencies in their offers, and fracking is associated with increased levels of radon – the second leading cause of lung cancer worldwide²².

In summary:

These studies indicate that fracking often leads to a drop in residential property values, and long term studies also show a drop in the overall welfare of oil and gas extraction communities. Basically, there is a domino effect: Decreasing values for home sales in a community eventually impact all of the homes in that community – through lowered appraisals, loss of equity, diminished refinancing opportunity. There's also greater scrutiny by mortgage lenders and insurance companies. In short, all aspects of home ownership can be impacted, and affected communities become distressed.

Please keep in mind, regarding the possibility of a fracking moratorium instead of a ban: Based on the results of the studies looking at property proximity to fracking specifically, and to industry in general, the infrastructure associated with fracking – large diameter transmission pipelines and compressor stations – will likely also impact property values. So, if some counties allow fracking and others do not, those counties that don't frack could still suffer from the impacts of fracking, as infrastructure is built around the state to treat and transport the gas.

Muehlenbachs, Lucija Anna, E. Spiller, and C. Timmins. 2012. **Shale Gas Development and Property Values: Differences Across Drinking Water Sources**. National Bureau of Economic Research. *Working Paper 18390*.

¹¹ Hite, Diane. 2006. **Summary Analysis: Impact of Operational Gravel Pit on House Values, Delaware County, Ohio**. Auburn University.

¹² Anstine, Jeff. 2003. **Property Values in a Low Populated Area when Dual Noxious Facilities are Present**. *Growth and Change*. 34(3): 345-358.

¹³ Hodge, Timothy R. 2011. **The Effect of Ethanol Plants on Residential Property Values: Evidence from Michigan**. *The Journal of Regional Analysis and Policy*. 41(2): 148-167.

¹⁴ McCormack, Thomas. 2009. **The Potential Financial Impacts of the Proposed Rockfort Quarry**. The Centre for Spatial Economics.

¹⁵ Erickcek, George A. 2006. **An Assessment of the Economic Impact of the Proposed Stoneco Gravel Mine Operation on Richland Township**. W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

¹⁶ Erickcek, George A. 2006. **An Assessment of the Economic Impact of the Proposed Stoneco Gravel Mine Operation on Richland Township**. W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

¹⁷ Julia Haggerty, Patricia H. Gude, Mark Delorey, Ray Rasker. **Long-term effects of income specialization in oil and gas extraction: The U.S. West, 1980–2011**. *Energy Economics*. Volume 45, September 2014, Pages 186–195

¹⁸ Grant D. Jacobsen and Dominic P. Parker. 2014. **The economic aftermath of resource booms: evidence from boomtowns in the American West**. *The Economic Journal*, 126 (June), 1092–1128.

¹⁹ Andy Peters. 2013. **Fracking Boom Gives Banks Mortgage Headaches**. *American Banker*. November 12 2013, 11:19am EST

²⁰ National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC). 2016. **Hydraulic Fracturing (Fracking)**. The Center for Insurance Policy and Research (CIPR), Sept. 8.

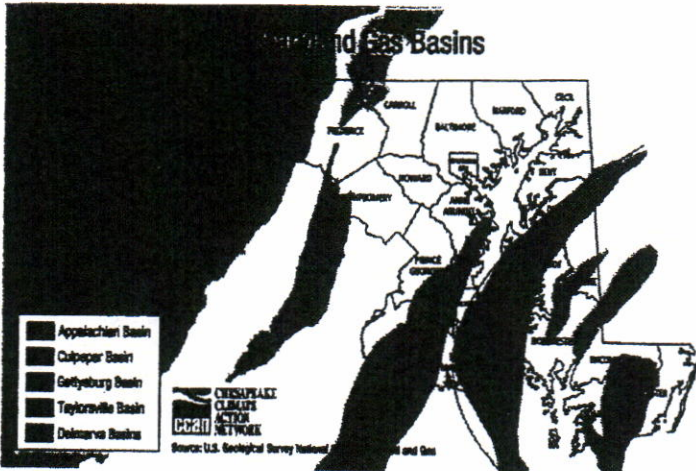
²¹ Moncrieff, Stacey. 2007. **Environmental Hazards: Know the Neighborhood**. *Realtor Magazine*, December. National Association of Realtors.

²² Joan A. Casey, Elizabeth L. Ogburn, Sara G. Rasmussen, Jennifer K. Irving, Jonathan Pollak, Paul A. Locke, and Brian S. Schwartz. **Predictors of Indoor Radon Concentrations in Pennsylvania, 1989–2013**. *Environmental Health Perspectives*. Vol. 123, No. 11. November.

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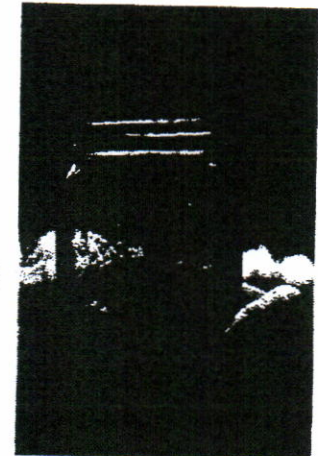
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Southern Maryland Sierra Club Contact- Rosa E.P. Hance re.pinnola@gmail.com 240-808-4233

[Facebook.com/somdsierraclub](https://www.facebook.com/somdsierraclub)

From: Sue Myers <suekmyers@earthlink.net>
To: County Commissioners <csmc@stmarysmd.com>
Date: 3/7/2017 10:28 AM
Subject: NO FRACKING

County Commissioners,

Please, please help keep our county and state safe!

NO FRACKING IN ST MARY'S or MARYLAND!

V/r,

Sue Myers

Leonardtown

Brenda Songy

40895 Lark Way
Leonardtown, MD 20650
(301) 997-1046
Brenda Songy@gmail.com

3 March 2017

Board of County Commissioners
Building
Baldrige Street
Leonardtown, Maryland 20650

Chesapeake
41770

Gentlemen,

In the current, frenetic political climate, I wanted to bring to your attention a dangerous threat to the inhabitants of St. Mary's County. As many energy companies have been emboldened by reduced oversight and liability, many small communities are being tempted to accept monies for selling-out their environment and the health of future generations.

I have worked in the south for many years, fighting Wall Street greed which takes children's lives from Main Street for the simple price of a few school laptops. Below are maps of toxins which now number in excess of 3,000 produced at 1 million pounds or more annually, toxins which corporate laws now require the taxpayer clean up. Not surprisingly, the cancer maps have an obvious correlation. I have also attached a map of fracking leaks in the country as well as a link from Scientific American verifying the toxicity of water tables after fracking occurs. Once poisoned, these aquifers are both irreplaceable and unable to be repaired.

There is a difference between a business which adds to the long-term success and viability of a place (thank you for the new movie theater being the catalyst for improving the one in Lexington Park whose lack of competition made him a slum lord), and a snake-oil salesman who seeks to make short-term gains at the expense of unsuspecting communities. As we know, the costs of cancer far outweigh the cost of whatever trinket they may offer, both emotionally as well as financially.

I ask that you all vote unanimously to forbid fracking in St. Mary's County as well as any rights and through-ways of pipelines and compressors that also have a reputation for releasing carcinogens into our families' environments.

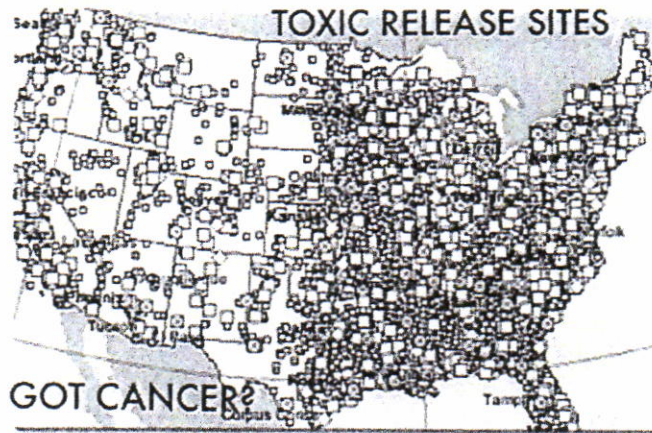
Sincerely,

Brenda Songy

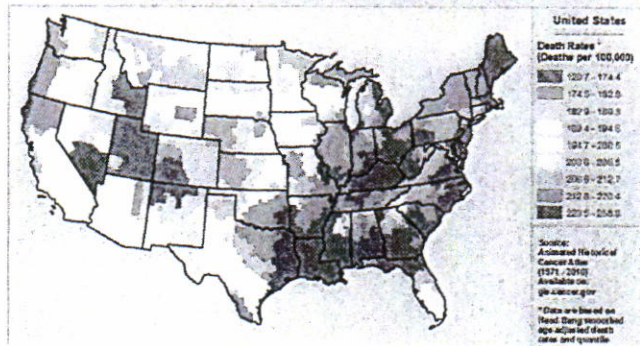
Attachments

Cc: The Enterprise & Calvert Recorder

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/fracking-can-contaminate-drinking-water/>



Smoothed Cancer Death Rates by HSA
All Cancers: Both Sexes, 1991-1995



Q oil leaks maps



FracTracker Alliance

US Pipelines Incidents Are a Daily Occurrence - FracTracker Alliance



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Heidi Sue Angueira

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MON 10:47PM



Heidi Sue Angueira

Mon

St. Mary's County Commissioners: I write a...

St. Mary's County Commissioners;
I write as a citizen of this county that you uphold the ban of fracking in St. Mary's. It has been proven that fracking can cause devastating environmental contamination resulting in the loss of land, livelihood and possibly life. This region is too beautiful, rich with history and landscapes to be squandered for a few measly dollars. We should focus on sustainable methods, such as solar and zero point energy. We should focus on our tourism appeal and continue to preserve this beautiful place we all call home.

Lat



Jayne C. Walsh

Mon

Please enact a countywide ban on fracking ...

Aj



Anne Marie Dailey

Mon

As a St. Mary's County resident I support t...

Adc

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labs



Mandy Riley

Thu



Thank you for your time.

You

Not

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note



Valerie Brosky

Jan 7

Thank you.



Heidi Angueira
45923 Burns Drive
Valley Lee



Jenn Vickers Quade

Jan 2

Convenience centers are open today.



Kevin Pitcock

Jan 2

The St. Andrews Landfill and six Conve...

Away



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Jayne C. Walsh

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MON 9:41PM



Heidi Sue Angueira

Mon

St. Mary's County Commissioners; I write a...

Please enact a countywide ban on fracking and wastewater injection. We count on you to protect our water, agriculture and health. Thank you.



Jayne C. Walsh

Mon

Please enact a countywide ban on fracking...



Anne Marie Dailey

Mon

As a St. Mary's County resident, I support t...



Mandy Riley

Thu



Valerie Brosky

Jan 7

Thank you



Jenn Vickers Quade

Jan 2

Convenience centers are open today.



Kevin Pitcock

Jan 2

The St. Andrews Landfill and six Conve...

Away



Write a reply...

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Anne Marie Dailey

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MON 9:36PM



Heidi Sue Angueira

Mon

St. Mary's County Commissioners; I write a...

As a St. Mary's County resident, I support the bill for a state-wide ban on fracking and a local ban on tracking and it's infrastructure. I hope the commissioners will support these, too!

Lab



Jayne C. Walsh

Mon

Please enact a countywide ban on fracking...

Ap

Add
conv
labe



Anne Marie Dailey

Mon

As a St. Mary's County resident, I support t...

You



Mandy Riley

Thu



Note
conv
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Valerie Brosky

Jan 7

Thank you.



Jenn Vickers Quade

Jan 2

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Kevin Pitcock

Jan 2

The St. Andrews Landfill and six Conve...

Away



Write a reply...



TJ Sebastian [St. Mary's County Government](#)

20 hrs ·

When talking about the local and state bans on fracking, I hope the commissioners remember that you can't un-drill a well and there are no do-overs with chemical spills.

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[Jayne C. Walsh](#)



Write a comment...

Sponso



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[xfinity.cor](#)
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"5 Sta

★ Fun Mi

🔄 Spin &

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