

WV Joint Judiciary Subcommittee Hearing, October 16 2006

Speaker: Davitt McAteer

I was the assistant secretary of the MSHA in the Dept. of Labor and in that position, as the Chief enforcement officer for regulation the mining industry, it came about that on Oct. 11 of 2000 the Martin County impoundment collapsed and failed, sending...environmental disaster, in Eastern Kentucky and southern WV. As a result of that failure, I represented Senator Byrd, and at his request, looked into the problem with impoundments.

The problem with coal wastes was serious, and that we needed to take a good hard look at how we were going to solve them. At that recommendation Senator Byrd and Representative Rogers paneled the National Research Council to study it, which began in 2000 and reported back in 2002. The report was a coal waste impoundments, risk responses, and alternatives. That study looked at the question of coal waste impoundments from a law standpoint, but the study really didn't go into, what you do with the waste material from a mine, after the mining process it goes through.

This problem is not unique to the United States, or to West Virginia, or for the coal industry as a whole, for that matter. The mining industry throughout the world has created a lot of waste, and the materials that need to be disposed of. Historically, we've dumped them into big piles, or impoundments. But the impoundment process also creates a sludge material, which is something you're going to be hearing about today. Now that sludge material is being supposed to be waste from the mine itself, from the coal itself, and water is used in preparing it, and chemicals that come naturally in the coal, and chemicals that are used in the preparation of the coal. Now, its cleaner so that we don't have this burning in the atmosphere, but in doing so we tend to concentrate some of the chemicals and some of the minerals in the impoundment or waste material, and some of this waste material then is placed either on the surface, or sometime its disposed of underground.

The disposal of that creates problems that we really have not addressed. And the academy, the National Research Council, suggests just that we need to address that the use of material and where it put. It was a bit surprised that we didn't know exactly what was in the impoundment materials or what was in the impoundments. That came as somewhat of a shock. But, two years later, at the request of Sen. Byrd, we set up a project—the Coal impoundment Project—and that project was intended to look at impoundments from two or three standpoints.

The first standpoint was the citizen's standpoint: If you're living downhill from the impoundment, what do you need to know? What kind of information would be helpful, to know what to do if the impoundment breaks? And, our first and primary interest was dealing with the first major emergency type of thing and so we put up on the website, provided to the libraries in the state, information with regard to these impoundments and if it breaks what you should do, who you should contact, and the phone numbers for the state and federal officials. As part of that, we went and had a series of public hearings—public meetings more like—with state residents who live downhill from the impoundments. And during those hearings and public meetings, it was quite obvious that the primary concern was the impoundment breaking. But more obvious was the day-to-day concern of the citizens: the impact that those impoundments were potentially having on their water and on the delivery of their water systems.

These impoundments typically are done in rural areas, not usually in communities that supply water. And, so the people have relied, historically, and to this day on wells. The concern

is that there is a great deal of impact on those wells and on that water supply, the aquifer, and on the groundwater. That notion was repeatedly stressed and the people were distressed and I saw personally the extent of the problem. That notion led us to sit with people in Williamson, some other places, but Williamson in particular, and we had citizens say, “Can you help us to identify what’s in the water?” Well, we’ll hear next from Ben Stout—he is on the staff at Wheeling—about those findings. But, I stress to you that to the large picture, in a large context, the impoundment, the sludge, and impoundment materials—we need to find a way to deal with them, to address them.

And I applaud those in industry that are looking for alternative ways to deal with it. We need to get to the pile and get some of the carbon content out. That way we reduce the amount of impounded material that is available. It is a bit early for an alternative goal for the waste, but I think we need to look at them, look at the way those impoundments impact people that live around them.

Thank you very much, and I’d be happy to take any questions.

Question and Answer:

Q: Are there any questions about the impoundments?

Q: I have a question about the funding of that kind of project, how is it funded, state, federal?

A: It is federal funding, from a fund earmarked by Senator Byrd.

Q: Are there any further questions?

Q: You said that you were looking at possible alternative ways to dispose of this material. Could you explain what might be some ways that you know of now?

A: Well, we’ve taken a look around the world at ways people are doing it in other countries as well as in this country and some of the dry methods where you essentially dry it out and cake it, and bury that, or cover it with the soil—a method that is used both here and abroad. We’ve also looked at some ways that you could reduce the amount; mix it with some other kinds of inert materials. In particular there is a project we were working with up in Ohio where you take the old impoundments and mix that and burn that and reduce the new waste down to a small percentage of the total amount of waste that is being created and then its neutral. And then, they lay that under, cover that with soil. But, I think there’s some alternative ways that we need to look at it for the long haul. It’s a problem that’s not going to go away so I think we need to take a real hard look at, as the National Research Council recommended; we need to take a good hard look at it.

Q: Also, you mentioned the Williamson project. Did you find that there was a possibility that some of the wells were contaminated by either the injection or the coal impoundments?

A: I’ll let Dr. Stout speak to that as a researcher. What we did find was that there were some contaminations, but the relationship is difficult to identify. We did find the contamination.

Q: We’ve all heard about the Marsh Fork situation, have you inspected that or been there?

A: I live nearby it; I’ve never been on the property itself. I’ve been in the school.

Q: I just wondered if in your estimation, you could compare it with other sites you've visited or are there some you've found to be more dangerous than others, or... What is your assessment of that?

A: Let me start out by saying that Buffalo Creek in 1972, killed 127 people, and since that time, WV has taken the lead on impoundments and protecting against failures of impoundments. The difficulty is that these are large structures that change on a regular basis and they do have failures, they do have problems. Marsh fork has met, I think, all the requirements of the DEP from the safety standpoint. My position personally, is, you shouldn't have a schoolhouse below a huge impoundment. It just doesn't make any sense. So, you can't move the impoundment, let's move the school. But as far as licensing—it doesn't make good sense...last week was the 40th anniversary of the Abarcam disaster in England where about 115 people were killed, 30 or so children in a schoolhouse, when a sludge pile slid down into that town. It just doesn't make good sense to do that, and there are alternatives to it.

Q: Is this just a problem in WV?

A: It is a problem with mining throughout the world. If you visit South Africa, you see huge mounds around Johannesburg from the gold mining, and they have these problems that leaks into the water supply there. And if you look at England, Germany, this is a problem, and it is a problem of larger and larger magnitude because as we produce greater tonnage of coal you increase the amount of waste material you are creating. You need to find a way to deal with that. Now we've worked with industry on the coal impoundment project, we've worked with industry and labor, and state agency to deal with the first aspect of that problem, and that is the failure of the dam itself. And now we've cause to work with industry, we'd like to see them participate, going forward to find a solution to this problem. It isn't a problem that's going to go away.

Q: Could you go into the problem of coal slurry being injected back into the mines, or buried?

A: I'm a little familiar with the injection issue through a study I was in with the NRC back in the 90's and that was an effort to take the waste, sludge, from the power plants and to try to inject that back underground. And that there were concerns at that time with members of the scientific community about injecting anything of large number, volume of that size underground, because of the concerns with groundwater, getting into the aquifers. So there is a lot of concern in the scientific community about this injection process. It solves one problem in effect, but we think it might create a second problem.

Speaker: Dr. Benjamin Stout

Ladies and Gentlemen, I'm Dr. Benjamin Stout, from Wheeling Jesuit University. I'm a biologist. I have Bachelor's in Agriculture and Forestry from West Virginia University. I have a PHD in biology. I've been at WJU for 16 years; I'm a tenured full professor.

I have a Power Point Presentation. When I went to the community meeting at Delbarton, citizens training session, we told them how to find the information system. We had 21 question and 20 of those were about water quality. So Mr. Macanteer instructed me to go down to take some samples—that is what he said, take some samples. And so we did, and I'd like to present the results of that study, it's a preliminary study; we also got some foundation funding to do a more comprehensive study, which we are engaged in currently.

Let me just point out, that chart is of a more comprehensive study, of several hundred water samples we've taken of stream water, well water and spring water in the vicinity of the Williamson, around Spring, Merrimac and Rawle Counties. This presentation is titled "Well Water Quality in the Vicinity of a Coal Slurry Impoundment near Williamson, WV". It was conducted about two years ago.

(Next Slide) The study was conducted at the request of citizens attending the Delbarton citizens training session. The purpose of this study was to address the citizens concerns about their well water. And we sampled locations shown on the map there. Of all the three of the samples, initially we sampled 15 different wells, and the municipal supply and the spring. In all but three of the samples we disconnected the household supply from one minute prior to collecting the samples and sending it off to the lab, and tested for heavy metals, that's the only thing we tested for. We tested two different times.

(Next Slide) The U. S. Geological Tug Fork gauging substation. Annual Average Discharge explanation, -We worked with citizens, showed them how to collect the water. We gave them bottles to collect water during high flow conditions. Black water events occur during high flow conditions. So, they collected during a deep flow -just after deep flow as indicated by the chart.

(Next slide) Table has a lot of information on it. This gives a snapshot of the samples and the results. First of all, we list in the left column metal levels of primary concern; these are regulated by the state. These are enforceable standards for Municipal water supplies. Secondary standards are listed below that. EPA notes that the secondary metals will give a bad taste or odor to the water. Next, nickel and sodium— health advisory. All values are in parts per billion (ppb).

(Next Slide) Sampled a spring near Williamson—this is a spring that people fill their water bottles at and so we wanted to get a sample for comparison. Then a series of wells: Those wells are numbered and on the map. Also lists the depths of the wells. First one is a hung dug well at 26 feet. The rest of the wells are deeper wells, ranging from 55 to 158 feet.

(Next slide) Found a high concentration of Iron. Standard is 300. There were 364 ppb in that sample. Municipal water supply we found Lead above the standard but that is after it went to a local commercial establishment. Worse wells: we see lead in five of the wells that were above standard. Also selenium is in one of the wells above standard. Barium is in one of the wells above standard. Also higher manganese levels. Iron and sodium were above standard.

(Next slide) We got one sample from a gentleman who was flushing water out of his hot water tank into a bucket. Not a sterile bucket but found sludge in the bottom. Took sample of that sludge and sent it off to the lab. Results: Arsenic 150 ppb, Barium above standard, as well as other metals. Compared the water results from the hot water tank and the well on the same property. Hot water tanks. Concentrating levels of metal within the tank. Citizens report that hot water tanks don't last very long and metal fixtures would corrode in two years. Also, had difficulty with filter because they turned red or black and would clog up.

(Next Slide) Samples that citizen collected. Five of those wells we have previously sampled during low flow events. Plus an extra 5 samples. In 6 out of 8 wells, we detected Arsenic during high water flow events. In all but one of the wells we detected high levels of lead during high flow as well.

(Next Slide) Conducted more detailed survey. Review of a Map. Relations between slurry implaments and known injection sites. Need to continue the study of well and ground water. Citizens do not have other alternative water supplies. Need to find other ways to use the slurry material. Cannot find a new use of this material until we know what is in it.

Are there any questions?

Question and Answer:

Q: Why can't you test this? Why don't you have knowledge of what this is?

A: Coal impoundments are on company property. It would be trespassing to go onto that property and we don't want to do that. We want to work with the industry and not against the industry.

Q: Is it trade secrets?

A: No.

Q: Is there any history of sampling of these wells over the past 20 years?

A: Yes, DEP sampled for Iron. I have not seen the data. This was about 10 years ago.

Q: I am assuming that these impoundments have been there for about a decade?

A: Yes, one or two decades.

Q: What is the statistical significance of these readings? Are there EPA standards for municipal supplies?

A: In our more detailed study, we are following wells over time to better understand the variance in readings. The EPA standards are enforceable, and in place to ensure drinking water is safe. They are thresholds that have been determined by the best science that we have today.

Q: What can we take from these numbers?

A: The take home message is that there is a problem and these people need to be supplied with good, quality water. We are concerned about the intake above the outflow—but this is another broken link. We are barely scratching the surface.

Q: Did you go beyond the 2 or 3 miles around the impoundment to compare results?

A: We did. We did have a few wells that had good water, really only one or two within that area. We sampled several streams.

Q: What did you use for control purposes?

A: Very difficult to do in West Virginia given the number of impoundments and injection sites. There are problems going too far out as you will run into other problems. We did the best we could. One thing we looked at was streams and dug wells—only at 10 feet or so.

Q: On this map are there any public water systems?

A: There is one downstream and upstream of Williamson.

Q: I am assuming the deep wells and dug wells that you sampled do not have public water?

A: A couple of these homes do have public water, but they also they these wells. So we used these wells for sampling.

Q: In the areas that you did study, were you able to identify the injection sites?

A: We know of 114 current impoundments. I don't know how long underground injection has been going on. No one has an inventory.

Q: Did you test the water at the plant?

A: No, they are required by the EPA to test their water once a month. We did take tap water samples and also did bottled water.

Speaker: Jack Spadaro

There are two issues: One, the impoundments and the potential hazards and, Two, the coal slurry injections.

The impoundment hazards are well known and well documented. The analysis of slurry from the Martin County slurry spill. Reads the chemical analysis dated March 30, 2001. This is typical results of coal slurry. There have been dozens of breakthroughs, but the Martin County spill was the biggest. There has not been any geo-technical analysis done on the results of coal impoundments.

Injection has been going on in this state since the 1970's. EPA records show that injection around the Rawles area began in the late 1970's and continued for approximately 10 years. There was no permit process for the first 7 years. 1.4 billion gallons of coal slurry were injected within the Rawles Springs of Mingo County. We now have about 50 active coal injection sites included in many counties. This means that there are 400 injection wells. That means that hundreds of millions of coal slurry are being injected into the ground water.

Wells within these areas where 1.4 billion gallons are injected -lead, iron, and manganese levels are high. Following the Buffalo Creek Disaster technology increased and there are other options now. There is a dry filter press process that was used at Martin County Coal Company before the breakthrough in 2000. This process was discontinued due to the cost. So in order to make more money on their coal, they stopped using the dry filter press process.

This process makes a solid material that has high moisture content—this can be mixed with other materials. This is not a hazard to the public. I would be an advocate to return to these systems.

Are there any questions?

Question and Answer:

No questions

Speaker: Scott Simonton (?)

Not sure what more I can add to what the other speakers have already said. I have worked to draw the connection from coal injection and drinking water in those areas. I have done sampling similar to Dr Stout and I have reviewed his data. I would like to comment on the sampling.

Coal injections began in 1977. There is 30 years of data that we really just do not have and we can not go back and guess what the impacts might have been. We have anecdotal evidence from the wells and those folks who live there. But it is hard to think back and figure

out how the water looked in 1985. So, it is hard to look back in time and see what that the long term effects might have been.

The research and the data that I have found is similar to that Dr. Stout has found. We see a level of containments in the wells and hot water tanks. I don't know if anyone is going to show you what the water looks like in these wells—it is just awful. It is really, really bad—it is the worst I have ever seen, frankly.

Something that has not been mentioned, something that I have found, this is similar to what comes out of people's taps in Rawles and I have seen it come out of peoples taps and toilets like this. Fluctuation in containments is common because of the complex hydrological system in this area. One thing that I have found by visiting some of these homes is a high concentration of sulfate. Active bacteria make sulfate a sulfuric gas. When you walk into these homes you can actually smell that rotten-egg, sulfuric smell. This is not a healthy gas to be breathing. Along with health professionals and the Department of Health, I did some quick analysis using a hand held meter with the homes. I found that the gas level within a running shower was higher than the EPA standard for occupation. About twice the standard. So these people are not only living with this water everyday, but with the sulfuric gas,-that long term exposure just couldn't be good.

Injection sites are not sealed tubes, if they were we would not be here talking today. The crack and holes within the mines allows the migration of this contaminated water to surrounding hydrological systems. This system is connected to wells and surface water supplies. Unless we can inject the injection well below the levels of surface water than it is probably a pretty bad idea, we got 30 years of injecting in this area and we are just now starting looking at it and we don't know the full level of impact. I do believe that the well water and drinking water problems that we have, come from the 30 years of injection. Further study need to be done. Public water needs to be obtained for as many residents as possible. On top of that, for those who do have well water supplies, we need to protect that supply.

Are there any questions?

Question and Answer:

Q: On the studies that you are doing, are you looking at the depths of the injection sites and the correlation of those depths to the water tables?

A: The only supervision is the points around the injection sites as regulated by the EPA. We don't have a horizontal system; we have vertical migration of contaminated water. We can imagine if we start putting pressure on our group water system, we are going to get movement and certainly movement up. We have looked when we can at drinking water or well water depths and slurry injection depths. Most of the water wells are below the alma water seam. Some of the water wells are below the pond creek seam. But we don't want to get trapped into thinking that the water will only move down. It will certainly move up. Through the mining process we don't have a ground water system that mimics a natural system. We have migration up and down and all around, frankly.

Q: Is there a filtration process that this slurry goes through before being injected in ground?

A: No. There is no filtration from the plant. The slurry is moved as slurry and it goes from the top of a mountain to the bottom in a hole.

Speaker: Dawn Seaburger

I want to talk a little about the health aspects that we are seeing in Rawle and before I do that, this (holds up glass jar of water) is water that we see quiet often and you can determine whether or not you would be willing to drink it. Maybe a few of you have seen the National Geographic article that came out in March with a photograph of a resident within the Rawle area, with the water coming out to the tap brown. It was like sludge. You wouldn't want to drink that. I wouldn't want to drink that.

What I have been doing for the past two years is talking to the residents of the Rawle, Lick creek Spring area trying to get a big picture of their overall health by asking them specific questions about whether or not they have been diagnosed with certain diseases. What their ailments are? Whether they are having children have been diagnosed with ADD or ADHD. And, trying to determine what medications people are on.

In looking at this and talking to the people, one thing I always ask is "Do you drink the water?" Well, most of the people tell me "No that they do not drink the water anymore." Then, my next question is "do you cook with it?" Most often I get is "yes", they do cook with the water. Now what happens is when they cook with the water with the heavy metal concentration that we are seeing that the concentration is getting into their food.

I also ask if they brush their teeth with the water. This is very important because one of the things I found in my research is one of the effects that can be is tooth loss. Manganese in high concentration in water has neurological problem and also reacts with tooth enamel. It causes teeth to become brittle and turn black. Most of these people who live in the area have lost some or all of their teeth including children. I talked to families who moved into this area or only been here for a short while, who had perfect dental records at the time they moved to the area and now Mom, Dad, and children at the age of 10 or 11 are losing their teeth. I find that totally objectionable.

One of the questions asked earlier is the municipal services going to be able to take care of the problem. And, the answer is no they are not. The municipal services in the state of West Virginia are not set up to remove the containments and they are in poor shape. They are in a poor state and generally have underpaid staff if they can even keep someone for a long period of time and they are not set up to remove the containments we are seeing in this particular area. I think that this is a short term solution if the municipal wells are to take care of that.

Another thing that we are doing also is looking beyond the EPA's primary and secondary standards and looking at the risk based concentrations. We looked at some of these heavy metals and list all the things that are associated with coal slurry and the risk based containments and they were higher in these areas that what the EPA allows.

When we look at the toxicology and assess the risk base of these containments, we are setting ourselves up for not only acute reactions of this exposure to the water but chronic long term effects are going to affect these individuals the rest of their lives. This is assuming that these lives are long to begin with.

The kinds of things that we are seeing in excess in these areas are gall, kidney stones, chronic diarrhea, nausea, skin rashes, dermatitis, boils an inch to two inches in size around the groin area from bathing in this water. We are seeing increased ADD/ ADHD, tooth loss, and thyroid failure. I started asking the question, "Do you have thyroid problems?" "Have you been

diagnosed with a thyroid problem?" We found 25 people, 15 have thyroid failure. This is well above any state or national incident level.

We have an increases rate of neurological disorders, over all fatigue, disease. I brought a couple of journal articles with me today and would be happy to leave them for you to read. We know for a fact that lead exposure is going to cause brain damage. But what we don't talk about much is the manganese.

Manganese has emerged as a serious public health concern. We are seeing manganese is very high levels. Children and immature animals absorb more and secrete less manganese than adults. In infants, manganese easily gains access to the developing brain because of the immature blood brain barrier that is something that we do not see with other contaminant. From the other article that I will leave for your future reading: Manganese in children. Manganese is toxic when ingested or inhaled in large amounts over time. The effect of manganese is the decreased levels of dopamine in children. This is similar to Parkinson's disease—you know the jerking, or involuntary movement. We are also seeing memory loss that is associated with Parkinson's disease. The exposure to manganese can cause or produce problems with DNA. This runs the risk of causing developmental damages, learning disabilities that we are not going to be able to reverse.

These cases should be promoting a good case that the relationships between the high levels of and the kinds of effects that we are seeing here in the Rawls area. I can't say enough that this water is causing a health effect not only for the adults but for the children. The slurry is impacting the water.

Are there any questions?

Question and Answer:

Q: Did you look outside the slurry problems within the water and test for fluoride? The reason that I am asking is that my husband was raised in southern Pennsylvania and his whole family has dental problems.

A: I have not looked at average well water but you know not to discount fluoride, which is also a carcinogen, and a product of the aluminum waste industry, and probably should not be added to drinking water any time that you have heavy metals in your drinking water there is going to be a reaction that takes place. What is going to happen, as we are seeing, is that with Manganese there will be an increase risk of tooth loss. My primary point is that what we are seeing the physical ailments that we are seeing are probably due to the contaminants in the water and drinking this water over a long period of time. Are there other factors? -certainly...

Q: As I sit here and listen to all of these testimonies, and being worried about my district that has many coal impoundments and the injection process that is going on there, I am sitting here thinking what is one of the solutions? I am thinking that and obviously you already hinted, that is to make sure that everyone has public water and I know that either last year or the year before we passed legislation that the coal company is responsible for immediately supplying public water and developing long range plans. But what you are saying is that even the public water system is not set up to remove the contaminants. Am I correct to coming to that conclusion or what is your recommendation?

A: Well, I would certainly talk to the engineering department and the department of health and human resources and they are very aware that these source water protection plans that we

developed a few years ago are for them. The fact is that you know providing public water, which is occurring in the Rawls area right now is a good short term solution to a problem. But if you compare the problems that we are seeing with oil, within our global nation right now, the first that we need to do is to make sure that the drinking water we are supplying right now is good here in the United States. But, no -these water systems are not set up they can very easily be overloaded with the containments and if we are going to start seeing these high concentrations getting into the Tug Fork River, getting into the wells that can be a problem for these Municipal systems in order to try to protect the public. Because again, they only test their water on a monthly basis, they are not required to test for all containments unless they have had a problem in the past. It is very costly to try to test the water for these containments for the whole suite every time you go out. I don't see the municipal system, unless we improve it greatly, is going to be able to deal with the types of containments that we are talking about on an individual basis.

Speaker: Donatta Blankenship

(Audience Clapping)

I am here on the behalf of my family and my community. First of all, I have a sample of my own water we have a filter on our water. When we first put a filter on it, it looks clear but as you can see it is not so clear. It has orange and red in it. And, you can see the chemicals and everything stirred up in it. That is taken from our sink. The water has ruined my jewelry.

I have been there about five years and I never had no illness or anything and than last spring I ended up getting really sick and had to go to the hospital and the doctor told me that my liver was failing. I started thinking what could have caused my illness and I couldn't really think of anything else but the water. I never drank the water and thank God I can say that, and I never done anything to cause my liver problems. When they went to test me, they could not figure out what was causing it. Again, about a month ago I ended up back in the hospital with the same problems and symptoms. I came here to Charleston and one thing they did find was that I have copper in my body. People ask me how I got copper in my body and I tell them that I really don't know. I make the joke that I do not go about eating pennies. (Laughter) But it is something serious. There are not too many ways that you can go about getting copper in your body. They have checked my medications that I have been on and it was nothing like that.

I have a 14 and 15 year old that has been scared to death ever since I got sick with this. This is really hard to face sometimes. You don't know what is going to become of them. For the sake of the children, but it is like my two—why are they having to live with the dirty water? Why are they so scared that their mommy is going to die? That is not really helping the children out. My daughter she has diarrhea all the time and an upset stomach. The other one has breathing problems now. My son, he has sores on his back. I was asked not too long ago about the sores on his back. But, he doesn't take a shower there anymore. He goes to my parents' house—they have city water—and I get asked that if he doesn't shower how does he get the sores on him?

I am a mother, and I wash cloths. I have to wash clothes in this water and when you wash the clothes, it comes off the cloths and on to the body. It is like when you take a shower the chemicals and stuff are going to go through your body. I hope that you all will do a further study on this slurry injection because we do need it up there where I live and I have found out from a lot of other people; I am not a very good speaker but I have been talking to a lot of other people

to find out what other similar problems. I hope that you all will really see what you can do for us. I really appreciate that you listened to what I have to say.

Question and Answer:

Q: Did you have the department of health or anyone else do an analysis on your water?

A: We just had Ben Stout do our water. No, I have not had the health department out.

Speaker: Debbie Sammons

I live at Lick Creek which is just outside Williamson. We have lived with this water for approximately 16 years. (Crying) I have raised my children, my two children, with this contaminated water. We didn't know any better, we had no idea. I have an 18 year old daughter who has constant sinus problems. We spoke about teeth; my dentist has told me that my children have the softest teeth that he has ever seen. My 18 year old daughter chipped her front tooth and it just fell off. Half of it just fell off. She had no idea when or how. Her dentist built her a tooth to go with the par that she still had left.

She has found lumps in her breast twice, she is so young that they will not do mammograms; they do ultrasounds. She all during her life has had a female infection the same as I have. We had no idea why. We kept going to the doctor and they kept giving us medicine. I wondering if it was something that she was bathing in or something. We did away with the bubble bath and it made no difference. Numerous, numerous medical problems and every house that you go to you will find the same thing.

I personally have a mass in my breast, I have cysts in my uterus, I have sinus problems. We have the same as everyone else; we break out if we use that water. If you bath in this water you break out. It finally came to a head for my family when we started to get really involved when we thought we were going to lose my six year old son. (Crying)

I was home from work one evening and he was throwing up. My husband and daughter were trying to get him dressed to take him to the hospital. And they couldn't get him dressed because they could not get him to stop throwing up. They would get him back to the couch to try to put his clothes back on and he would run to the bathroom. And he was running back and forth; back and forth. And when I went in, I just said let's get a bag; just get a bag and let's go. My husband had pulled what looked like puss out of his penis. He had try to pee, and couldn't pee, my husband got paper towels and pull this out of him. We put it in a jar and took it with us. He passed a kidney stone at six years old.

So, we took him to the hospital and by the time we got to the emergency room, he was peeing blood. They admitted him. They called the doctor to come and check him—they called his doctor at home to come in and check him. By the time he got there, he threw up all over the doctor. We gave him the jar and they gave it right back to me. I don't know if they ever tested it, but that is beside the point. They called in a neurologist. We stayed, all four of us, my daughter would not leave the hospital either. She was younger then.

This has been approximately three years ago. All four of us stayed in that room—we would not leave. None of us—we didn't leave him, not for one second, we were that scared. They started putting I.V.'s in him, different antibiotics and they got him cleared up. They never could tell me what it was. The Doctor said that it looked like some kind of viral infection, we really don't know. But, we think that we have got it and it has cleared up.

So we took him home and a few weeks later he got sick again. So we took him to a different hospital this time. The doctor there we told him, you know, we were beginning to suspect that there is something in our water. And, they did tests; they did blood work, and what they do. And the paper that he sent me home with said Toxic Environmental Poisoning. Now this is a six year old baby and he is here. That is when we really starting asking questions and that is when we got to attend the Del Barton meetings that Mr. Stout told you about, that is how we came in contact with him and started to get answers.

My husband lives with kidney stones. He has had lithotripsy surgery three times; he has had surgery on his kidneys several times. Right now both of his kidneys are full of kidney stones. They tell us to just wait until they start moving and then we will do the lithotripsy and what we need to do. But right now we will just leave them alone.

My daughter, my 18 year old daughter, has passed kidney stones. I have passed kidney stones—this is so many things to put into just a couple of minutes—countless, just countless medical problems.

The filters here that you see are from a neighbor's well. She could not be here this morning because her daughter-in-law is having a baby. Two months early. The daughter-in-law lives two doors up from us. We have a high miscarriage rate. I am one of those. When we found out that I was pregnant, four or five years ago, or two years before my son was born; I found out that I was pregnant, which was a major shock, at our age. The doctor said, "Drink plenty of water". I did. I thought that my water was safer than any other water because it was coming straight out of the ground. It was the water that God had provided for me. I felt it was safe. I was wrong. As a result, I probably killed my baby. (Crying) But I didn't know it. I had no idea.

And again, I am just one of many who have gone through the same thing in this area. We are here today to ask you please to fund and to support a study on sludge injection. Please. It is needed. Not just for us. We have city water coming, yes, we do. It is not turned on yet, but we have it coming. But our concern for my community right now is what has this water done to us? To my children? What kind of life are my children going to have because of the fact that I raised them in this contaminated water? Right now they are both sick, are they going to get sicker? And, not just my children—there are other children out there who don't have city water coming. And right in my county; many communities do not have city water coming. They are still living with this. And they are living with the same things I have been living with. So, I ask you please, to support this. To support the funding and support the study that we need to find out exactly what been exposed to and what is in this. What have they done to us? We need to know so we can maybe fight it. Thank you.

Question and Answer:

No questions.

Speaker: Mr. Chairman: We will have the industry come and speak to us at the next meeting. Also, we will have the DEP come and speak to us.