



November 2, 2009

The Honorable Senator Jane Nelson
State of Texas, District 12
District Headquarters
1235 South Main, Suite 280
Grapevine, Texas 76051

Re: Gas Well Emissions

Dear Senator Nelson:

As you are aware, recent news reports by the ABC Dallas affiliate, WFAA, have brought to light some alarming findings with respect to possibly toxic emissions from the Barnett Shale gas wells in our area. I, along with other community leaders, am understandably concerned with the effects of these emissions on all of us. In one of the newscasts it was stated that the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) had just recently obtained and utilized infrared equipment that identifies heat emissions. The conclusion presented on the newscast suggests that the release of heat vapors at well sites and compression stations also allows for highly toxic chemicals (benzene) to be released into the atmosphere. Representatives from the natural gas industry were quoted as saying that the toxic emissions were minimal and not a health hazard.

That old saying might come in to play here, "There are three truths...1) what he said 2) what she said and 3) somewhere in between the two." The one thing that is crystal clear is that we need to know exactly what we are dealing with. It is my understanding that the TCEQ has conducted testing and preliminary findings suggest that gas well emissions have reached unacceptable levels so as to pose an immediate and/or long-term health threat. The final report is expected by the end of the year.

While we currently have fifteen (15) gas wells in production within our town limits, this is not just a local problem. This issue needs to be addressed on a statewide level. The air above Bartonville will inevitably end up being the air that Texans breathe all over the state. Small towns, like ours, are already burdened with repairing the damage to our roads by drilling operations as well as pipeline damage to our countryside. We have not budgeted for the monumental task of air pollution abatement. This is an undertaking for the State and the Federal government. Since a considerable amount of your district falls within the Barnett Shale, I am certain that you are already working to expedite a resolution.

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We implore you to allocate sufficient funding and resources, on the State level, to investigate and abate what appears to be an environmental disaster in the making. This should be the highest priority of the State Legislature.

Sincerely,



Ron Robertson
Mayor

Cc: State Representative Tan Parker
Andy Eads, Denton County Commissioner, Pct #4
TCEQ Director, Mark Vickery