

CACC



NEWS

The Future of the Earth is in our Hands

www.cacmi.org

Hydrofracking Presentation Featured at CACC's GMM

CACC's GMM (General Membership Meeting) is almost here! It is scheduled for Sunday, May 20, 1 to 5 p.m. at HeartDance Studio, 1806 E. Michigan Avenue in Lansing. Our annual general membership meeting will include a presentation on the important issue of hydrofracking, music by Great Lakes songwriter, passionate earth-keeper and CACC chair, Victor McManemy, and a potluck, annual board member elections, and a silent and live auction. Join us at this important and fun annual gathering to get informed and inspired, and meet up with old and new friends working together on behalf of Michigan's environment.



Maryann Lesert

Maryann Lesert will speak on "The Concerns About Fracking and Other Environmental Issues." Michigan is in the midst of a firestorm, with big corporations staking out our northern woodlands and other rural areas for hydrofracking. They are drilling to enormous depths for natural gas and in the process, poisoning our drinking water and groundwater - perhaps forever. Now is the time to stop this madness and protect our watersheds for future generations. Maryann Lesert will provide updates on hydrofracking in northern Michigan and speak to how we, as Michigan citizens, can stop this harmful practice. Lesert is a published author, a prolific playwright, and Assistant Professor of English at Grand Rapids Community College. Active with Ban Michigan Fracking, she is well-versed in the dangers of hydrofracking. For more information, visit www.maryannlesert.com.

Please bring a dish to pass and new or gently used items for our silent auction. Stas Yascolt, CACC's lively auctioneer (Pinconning's Best!) will lead the final auction. Come prepared to bid and have fun!

To learn more about CACC's General Meeting and board candidates, check out www.cacmi.org or contact Connie Beauvais at: cacc.connie@broadstripe.net or (517) 641-4013. **THIS EVENT IS FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!**

Dangers of Fracking - 2 Presentations Scheduled in Northern Michigan

CACC and Ban Michigan Fracking are co-sponsoring two presentations in northern Michigan this month on the dangers of fracking. The presentations are scheduled for May 18 at the Grand Traverse Civic Center in Traverse City, and May 19 at the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Gaylord. Both programs will begin at 7 p.m. Speakers include Jessica Ernst, a scientist from Alberta, Canada and Kevin Heatley, a restoration ecologist from Pennsylvania.

Jessica Ernst will present "The Truth and Consequences of Fracking." She is a biologist, environmental consultant to the oil and gas industry, and a long-time critic of fracking in Alberta. Ernst has launched a multi-million dollar lawsuit against EnCana Corporation, the Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board, and the Alberta government over contamination of her property and drinking water, which she believes is caused by EnCana's fracking practices. According to Ernst's lawsuit, her drinking water is now so contaminated that it can be lit on fire. She also blames Alberta's oil and gas regulator, alleging that it not only tolerated illegal behavior by EnCana, but actively attempted to silence her complaints. Ernst's lawsuit against EnCana can be found at www.ernstversusencana.ca. Ernst recently received an international award for her efforts from UNANIMA International, a non-governmental organization affiliated with the United Nations that advocates on behalf of women and children, immigrants and refugees, and the environment.

Heatley will present "Woods or Wells? Ecological Consequences of Unconventional Gas Extraction." Heatley is a senior scientist with Biohabitats Inc., a firm that provides conservation planning, ecological restoration, and regenerative design services. He is also a consultant for the Responsible Drilling Alliance in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, a grassroots, all-volunteer education and advocacy coalition that seeks to educate its members and the public about deep shale gas drilling and its ramifications. Heatley's presentation will draw on his experience in Louisiana where environmental impacts by the gas and oil industry have been severe and cleanup has been paid for by the public.

For more information about the presentations, see www.banmichiganfracking.org

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Update on Midland Dioxin Cleanup

An Open Letter to the Citizens of Midland Read by Terry Miller, Lone Tree Council Chairman, at the EPA meeting in Kochville Township, April 16, 2012

We write as members of the region and other concerned groups that have worked for a protective cleanup for over two decades.

We want to applaud the recent progress in Midland to propose a cleanup and relocation plan for the City. This represents enormous progress and begins an important process to protect the community and the environment now and for our children.

Dow Chemical, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and the Environmental Protection Agency deserve credit for moving this issue forward.

We believe, however, that the cleanup number proposed is not fully protective of health and the environment, and we urge the citizens of Midland to demand the most protective cleanup possible.

The contamination, which contains many chemicals, but is characterized by dioxin-like compounds, threatens not only the health of residents, but also the food web.

The cleanup number proposed in Midland is based on the presumption that no one in Midland will ever raise chickens or other animals for food within the city limits. We think this indefinite limit on future uses in the community is unwise and potentially unsafe.

The cleanup number proposed is also based on the presumption that all soils in the area share common characteristics that make dioxin less of a concern for people. We believe this assertion has not been demonstrated to be true in all cases.

The cleanup number proposed is based on a cancer potency value that is half as protective as the number used at the national level. We believe Midland should be protected at the same level as others across the country. On February 17th, 2012, one day after the 250 ppt (parts per trillion) cleanup number was announced for soils in Midland, EPA released the non-cancer portion of the dioxin reassessment. For the first time ever, the agency established a reference dose for dioxin of 7 picokilograms/day. This reference dose translates to a soil concentration of approximately 50 ppt. Finally, the proposed cleanup number is based on human health concerns, and is not designed to be protective of ecosystems. This is inconsistent with the requirement of the RCRA Corrective Action and Permit programs, which require adverse risk to the environment be evaluated and controlled.

We believe this historic cleanup should be done once, and done right, so that this issue can finally be resolved for the community.

For a safe and protective cleanup, Lone Tree Council, Ecology Center of Ann Arbor, and Clean Water Action of Michigan

CACC's ECO - Calendar

Please check CACC's online calendar at:
<http://www.caccmi.org/calendar/plans.cgi/>

Report from HEAL Huron Environmental Activist League, CACC's Chapter in Alpena

William Freese, Director Huron Environmental Activist League

In early October of last year, HEAL was in Washington D.C. at the invitation of Earthjustice. We were there to provide testimony and to meet with House and Senate members regarding the three lawsuits that we and other environmental groups had filed against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The case names are: Commercial & Industrial Solid Waste Incinerators, Definition of Nonhazardous Solid Waste DSW, and Cement Kilns IV.

The first lawsuit was filed because the EPA would have allowed almost any company to incinerate its own wastes, as a form of recycling, therefore exempting most key provisions of the Clean Air Act that protect people from harmful air emissions.

Under the Clean Air Act, any facility that burns industrial waste is supposed to be regulated as an incinerator, which would ensure that toxic emissions from such burning are appropriately monitored and controlled to protect public health. But, whether a facility is actually regulated as an incinerator, depends on how solid waste is defined.

The second lawsuit targets a designation issued by EPA that exempts broad categories of industrial solid waste, including scrap plastics, spent solvents and chemicals, industrial sludges and other materials if they are burned for energy by the company that generates them. The agency has also exempted whole tires, asphalt, and chemically treated wood wastes, no matter where they are burned. Industry groups have pressed previous administrations long and hard, for just such a favor, but the Obama administration is the first to submit so broadly to their demands.

We here in Alpena, the former site of one of the largest hazardous waste burning facilities in North America, LaFarge, are well aware of the consequences of hazardous waste burning. The hazardous waste burning stopped in 2001, but questionable materials are still burnt in LaFarge's cement kilns. We say this because our enforcement here is lax and we have had anonymous phone calls that tell us that tankers are being diverted here because their contents might otherwise show up in the incinerator emissions report for the facility that the waste is intended to go to.

The damage to our health and environment is why we are committed to seeing that Lafarge is forced into compliance with the Clean Air Act. The company is under a consent order to add wet and dry scrubbers and pollution control equipment by 2013 to reduce its pollution. Our cement kiln lawsuit should result in even less pollution, as in December of 2011 the U.S. Court of Appeals rejected the Portland Cement Association's attempt to kill Clean Air Act standards - standards that will reduce cement plants' emissions of mercury and other hazardous pollutants by more than 90 percent and save between 900 and 2,500 American lives every year. Our last lawsuit is to make the EPA set and enforce the rules for cement kilns as they are required to do by law.



*LaFarge Cement Plant
Photo credit: Mark Hunter*

Take Action to Urge Comprehensive Health Studies for Communities Near Nuclear Facilities: Comment Period Ends May 30

Kay Cumbow, CACC Member

A recent National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report, "Analysis of Cancer Risks in Populations near Nuclear Facilities, Phase 1" acknowledges shortcomings in prior cancer risk studies done near nuclear facilities and seeks a more scientifically sound approach. The NAS report includes the former Big Rock Point reactor area near Charlevoix as one of seven recommended pilot studies.

While the report notes non-cancer radiation effects, the new effort proposes to study cancer as the sole risk. Beyond Nuclear, a nonprofit organization working to eliminate nuclear power and weapons, is urging that non-cancer health issues also be looked at, citing earlier studies around the former Big Rock Point reactor which have found marked increases in spina bifida, thyroid pathology and infant mortality. A public comment period, seeking public input on methodology, ends May 30. Submit comments by email to crs@nas.edu or fax at (202) 334-3077. To learn more, contact Cindy Folkers, Radiation and Health Specialist at Beyond Nuclear at cindy@beyondnuclear.org or (301)270-2209, extension 0. To read the NAS report, please search for the name of the report at the National Academy of Science website, www.nationalacademies.org.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

May 15-20, Kevin Kamps of Beyond Nuclear with film "Into Eternity" on tour in Michigan. For dates see CACC ECO-Calendar at <http://www.caccmi.org/calendar/plans.cgi>

May 18, 7 p.m., "Truth and Consequences of Fracking." Grand Traverse Civic Center, 1213 West Civic Center Drive, Traverse City, MI. Suggested donation: \$10 for the public, \$100 for industry and regulators.

May 19, 7 p.m., "Truth and Consequences of Fracking." First Congregational United Church of Christ, 218 W. Second St, Gaylord, MI. Suggested donation: \$10 for public, \$100 for industry & regulators.

May 19, 11 a.m., Mothers and Others Walk Walk starts at Liberty Park, Bay City, MI. See www.lonetreecouncil.com for more information.

May 20, 1-5 p.m., CACC GMM. See article on page 1.

September 7-9, SAVE THE DATE! Volunteer for CACC's booth at Wheatland Music Festival. Details on CACC's website soon!

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