



TAKE ACTION! VOICE YOUR OPINION BY APRIL 9, 2021

Encourage the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to Enforce their OWN Coal Mining Regulations

OUR ASK

For decades, the DEP has failed to protect our communities, water resources, and environment from longwall mining operations. We are encouraging everyone to make your voices heard and request that the DEP enforce the laws and regulations that govern the coal industry.

The DEP's public comment is open until April 9, 2021 and we are asking that you do the following:

- 1) Send an email or submit a comment through the DEP's online portal expressing your concern.
 - A sample letter has been included below. Feel free to use the letter or make your own edits to it. We have included talking points for you to rely on should you decide to write your own public comment.
- 2) Use the sample social media posts below on your group's pages to let your followers know about this issue and encourage them to voice their opinion to the DEP.
- 3) Have your group sign onto the Citizens Coal Council letter that our organization will be submitting to the DEP.

THE ISSUE

Act 54 of 1994 amended the Bituminous Mine Subsidence and Land Conservation Act (BMSLCA) of 1966 to allow damage to structures and water supplies. Under Act 54, the DEP is required to:

- ensure that structures and water supplies impacted by mining subsidence are repaired or restored;
- continue to enforce the laws that prohibit coal mining damage to streams, wetlands, and aquifers; and
- publish a report every five years on mine subsidence effects.

Repair and restoration requirements in the law are not being met by DEP, and streams and other water resources are not being protected—facts documented by the Department's own recordkeeping.

When DEP issues its “Act 54 Report” every five years, the agency’s own findings repeatedly note that repairs to subsidence-damaged homes and water supplies are rare. The agency’s reports also document that longwall mining is causing widespread pollution to surface waters and groundwater resources.

Longwall mining is a method of coal extraction where large panels of coal are removed without leaving surface support, resulting in widespread collapse of rock into the mine void and subsidence damage to the land surface. This type of mining is used in the bituminous coalfields in southwestern Pennsylvania, specifically Washington and Greene counties.

As detailed in CCC’s recent [report](#), “Undermining Trust: The Collapse of Environmental Protection in Pennsylvania,” the DEP has chronically failed--and continues to fail--to adequately enforce the provisions of both BMSLCA, as amended by Act 54, and the Clean Streams Law.

Citizens Coal Council has been working hard to ensure that the DEP enforces the law and its own regulations that govern coal mining companies that operate in Southwestern PA, but the Commonwealth needs YOUR help.

The DEP’s Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) is presently [accepting comments](#) from the public on this matter. We ask YOU and YOUR organization to express your thoughts and opinions to the CAC. We need your help! Working together, we can ensure real protection for our streams, lands, and environment.

We sincerely appreciate the work you do, too, and thank you for your help on this vital matter.

INSTRUCTIONS

Submit your comments to the DEP either through their online portal or via email.

- Comments will be accepted through Friday, April 9, 2021.
- All comments must be written and submitted by email or mail.
- You must include your name and address with your comments.
- Email and online comments can be:
 - Submitted through the DEP’s online portal at <https://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment/Comments.aspx>
 - OR
 - by sending an email to ecomment@pa.gov
- Written comments can be mailed to:
 - Department of Environmental Protection
 - Citizens Advisory Council
 - Rachel Carson State Office Building
 - P.O. Box 8459
 - Harrisburg, PA 17105-8459

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Facebook

Every five years under Act 54, the @PennsylvaniaDEP is required to publish a report on underground bituminous coal mining activities in the Commonwealth. Based on the department's own findings and documentation, the DEP is failing to adequately protect communities and water resources from longwall mining operations. This has been happening for decades and we must encourage the DEP to begin fulfilling its obligations under Article 1, Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution. The department's Citizens Advisory Council is accepting public comments on this issue until 4/9. Make your voice heard and urge the DEP to immediately begin enforcing regulations on the #coal industry. Submit comments [👉 https://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment/Comments.aspx](https://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment/Comments.aspx) or email ecomment@pa.gov. #environment #PADEP

Instagram

For decades, the @pennsylvaniadep has failed to protect our communities and water resources from longwall coal mining operations.

Make your voice heard by 4/9 and encourage the DEP to enforce the law and their own regulations.

Submit comments [👉 https://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment/Comments.aspx](https://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment/Comments.aspx) or by emailing ecomment@pa.gov. #environment #PADEP

Twitter

The @PennsylvaniaDEP has failed to protect our water resources and #environment from longwall mining operations. Make your voice heard by 4/9. Tell the DEP to enforce the law and regulations on the #coal industry. Submit comments [👉 https://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment/Comments.aspx](https://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment/Comments.aspx) or ecomment@pa.gov.

LinkedIn

Every five years under Act 54, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection is required to publish a report on underground bituminous coal mining activities in the Commonwealth. Based on the department's own findings and documentation, it is failing to adequately protect communities, water resources, and the #environment from longwall mining operations.

This has been happening for decades and we must encourage the DEP to begin fulfilling its obligations under Article 1, Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution. The department is accepting

public comments on this issue until April 9. Make your voice heard and urge the DEP to immediately begin enforcing regulations on the #coal industry.

Submit comments <https://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment/Comments.aspx> or email ecomment@pa.gov. #environment #PADEP

The Effects of Subsidence Resulting from Underground Bituminous Coal Mining in Pennsylvania, 2013-2018



Please use this image with your social media posts.

Daniel J. Bain, Taylor R. DaCanal, Anthony T. Iannacchione, Andrea R. Kautz, Patrick D. Shirey, Stephen J. Tonsor, Marja A. Copeland, A. Jared Deglmann, Memphis J. Hill, Dilki N. Kandamarachchi, Sadie D. Trout, Robert O. Winn



SAMPLE LETTER

Dear Citizens Advisory Council,

I write today to express my concern that the Department is not fully enforcing the applicable laws and has failed to adequately protect communities and water resources from longwall mining operations.

Based upon the Department's own Act 54 report, documented repairs to subsidence-damaged homes and water supplies are rare. The Act 54 Report cites damage from longwall mining that has caused widespread and long-term pollution to surface waters and groundwater resources in Washington and Greene counties.

As you are aware, longwall mines are overwhelmingly responsible for all damages caused by underground bituminous coal mining. During the 5th Act 54 period, 95 percent of all damages (and 100% of all stream damages) were attributed to longwall mining.

Additionally, over the 25-year period covered by the five Act 54 Reports, there have been 1,427 structure damages (94 percent due to longwall mining), and 1,726 water supply damages (67 percent

due to longwall mining). Only a meager percentage (less than 6 percent in the 5th period) of all damages to structures and water supplies have been documented as having been repaired.

I ask the CAC to call on the Department to enforce its regulations and the laws that apply to longwall mining operations, including the Clean Streams Law. The health of our environment, water resources, and lands are at stake. The Department must fulfill its constitutional obligations under Article 1, Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution: stop the pollution of our streams; stop the destruction of our natural, scenic, historic, and esthetic values of our environment. A stream without water is just a dry ditch.

Sincerely,

Insert Name

Insert Address
