



July 25, 2012

#8116

Margaret Wood and Nathan Luedke  
Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards  
563 Carter Court, Suite B  
Kimberly, WI 54136

Subject: Response to Inquiry Regarding Frac Sand Mining and Crystalline Silica Concerns

Dear Ms. Wood and Mr. Luedke:

Thank you for your letter of June 25, 2012 requesting that the departments of Natural Resources (WDNR) and Health Services (WDHS) establish a task force to evaluate the potential health consequences of living near a frac sand mine or processing facility, establish a health based standard for crystalline silica and conduct extensive monitoring. Although we are not able to agree to your specific requests at this time, we believe we are addressing the key concerns that you have raised through current regulatory practices and we welcome additional discussion with your Association.

WDHS and WDNR appreciate WALHDAB's key role in promoting and enhancing public health and share your interest in protecting the health and safety of people living and working near sand mines and processing facilities. WDNR has considered your request for development of new standards. WDNR believes that existing regulatory tools provide for successful management of the issue.

Since the issue was first raised, we have reviewed the existing regulatory framework and worked with the sand mining and processing industry to achieve a maximum feasible level of controls of particulate matter emissions from these facilities. Examples of WDNR's continuing efforts include:

- Applicants for sand mines and processing facilities are now required to submit fugitive dust control plans for their facilities with their permit applications, prior to the commencement of operations.
- Facilities must submit monitoring plans for monitoring particulate matter. WDNR has been working with facilities to ensure consistency in the application of monitoring and to ensure EPA monitoring requirements are met. Moreover, WDNR has been helping facilities that wish to monitor the ambient air near their facilities more thoroughly than is currently required.
- WDNR's Air Program has allocated 3,000 hours of staff time to monitor compliance at sand mines and processing facilities.
- WDNR has issued violations to facilities when needed and will continue to respond to complaints about air emissions from these facilities, and evaluate its approach to these facilities, as conditions warrant.

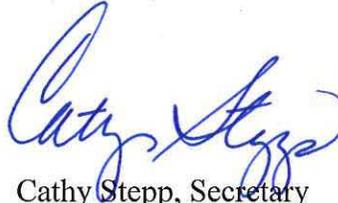
- WDNR has reviewed monitoring data received from sand mines and processing facilities. The compliance and monitoring work WDNR has reviewed (with the assistance of WDHS) has not revealed air problems near these operations that we think is likely to lead to unsafe exposures for nearby residents.

WDNR will continue to work to ensure that sand mining facilities are operated safely. Because you share this interest we welcome your continued input. If you would like to discuss the issues raised in your letter in more detail, please contact either Tom Woletz with the WDNR - Phone: (715) 839-3756; Email: [thomas.woletz@wisconsin.gov](mailto:thomas.woletz@wisconsin.gov), or Chuck Warzecha with the WDHS- Phone: (608) 264-9880; Email: [Charles.Warzecha@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Charles.Warzecha@dhs.wisconsin.gov).

Sincerely,



Dennis G. Smith, Secretary  
Department of Health Services



Cathy Stepp, Secretary  
Department of Natural Resources