

Thank you for allowing me to speak. My Name is Crystal Stroud. I am a formerly healthy, 29 year old Hairstylist at a downtown Towanda, PA salon, and my husband and I are local business owners with a 4 year old little boy, who were living out "our American Dream" until 3 weeks ago on Monday April 11th, 2011. That is the day we were notified our water well was contaminated with Barium, Chloride, Strontium, Manganese, Lead, Methane, Radiological material, and Radon from the drilling of the natural gas well 1200 feet from our property -- the water that we had been drinking, cooking with and showering in.

Prior to that day I, too, believed in the Goose that was going to lay the Golden Egg in Bradford County. I leased my two acres of property for \$5,000 to Chesapeake. We used the money to start fixing up our house, adding a pool, and thinking we were increasing our property value. Little did I know we were signing away life as we knew it.

Three weeks prior to April 11th I became ill. My hair started falling out. I was having heart palpitations, shortness of breath, and stomach cramps. My husband feared I was having panic attacks and suggested I see a doctor. I went to my family physician and the only thing they could find was that my heart rate and blood pressure were elevated. They sent me for blood work on my thyroid, those test results came back within normal range. They then recommended I take a medication for anxiety, as they didn't know what else could be afflicting me. Three days went by and my hands began to tremble and I would lose my balance as I stood from a sitting position. My speech started to become slurred and at that point I made another phone call to the doctor's office. I told them, "Something is wrong, This isn't right." I was told to continue the medication, hoping that it would "kick in soon."

Then on Monday April 11th, I received the phone call from Benchmark Analytics. They said my well water results were in and they were a major concern. My reply was "What do you mean? I have been extremely ill for the past 3 weeks and we can't figure out why" Their reply was "This could be the cause -- Barium is known to cause the symptoms you're experiencing" I then called my doctors office and son's pediatrician who then ordered blood work, as the Lead and Barium levels in our water was a major concern

After more blood tests and research they found I had extremely high levels of Barium in my body at a range of 110 normal range being 0 or less than 10 . When Barium accumulates in the body,

it usually affects the functions of the nervous system. Barium poisoning displays symptoms that are similar to flu or anxiety which is why it is not strange to find the condition misdiagnosed as flu or anxiety. Common symptoms of Barium poisoning include:

1. Muscle weakness and tremors
2. Difficulty in breathing
3. Stomach irritations accompanied by diarrhea
4. Anxiety
5. Cardiac irregularities such as abnormally high blood pressure and rapid heartbeat from profoundly low potassium levels and eventually
6. Paralysis

When I contacted Chesapeake (who I signed a lease with) and told them my well was contaminated, they sent out a Mr. Rick Hall. He came to my home and sat at the table and looked over my water results. He started by trying to explain away the substances found in my water.

When I asked him to explain the Radiologicals found in my water, he flipped to the last page and said "Oh the radon (which was 1.2 pCi/L when we purchased the house four years ago, and is now 154.5 pCi/L) ?" I said "No, the Radiologicals, Gross Alpha and Gross Beta." His reply was "Oh I don't know anything about them" (which surprised me as Benchmark informed me they were direct contaminates of the natural gas industry). He then asked me, "Didn't I realize anything was wrong with my water while I was drinking it? I said. "No! Here let me show you." I then drew a glass of water from the refrigerators' water and ice maker, I held it up to him and said, "Clear, now wouldn't you drink this?" His reply was "Yah, looks good to me"

This water was clear, but yet had so many chemicals in it, it required an emergency phone call from the water testing company. Mr. Rick Hall stated he would need to "Pass the Buck" to Chief (gas company), saying they were the closest well. I had to contact them. I told him they had not fracked the well next to my property and he stated, "It's a common misconception that fracking is what contaminates well water. It's the actual drilling process that causes the first phase of water contamination."

However, before leaving Mr. Hall could not give me a phone number to contact someone from Chief and had no clue even who I would speak with. After 3 days of phone calls to every phone number I found online associated with Chief, I finally spoke to a Mr. Richard Adams who told me "Lo and behold" a Mr. Rick Hall had called him.... Yet, Mr. Hall told me he had no clue who to call with Chief. Since 3 weeks ago when all

this transpired, I have still not seen a Chief representative at my home nor have I received a phone call. I have however had people hang up on me and tell me that they would pass on the information, never returning my calls. My well still has not been vented (with Methane levels of 32.4 mg/L) nor have I been offered water or a water buffalo, from either company.

I have gone door to door around my neighborhood warning people about my well contamination, hoping to prevent this from happening to someone else. Every neighbor I have talked to has problems with their water but they have not called anyone to test it. I was told that there is known Methane migration up the road and had one neighbor tell me that he can now light his water on fire, but that he isn't drinking it. Only "making coffee with it." These people aren't informed. There are children who are showering and drinking this water around my neighborhood. They don't know the risks and don't understand the severity of this situation. They don't have the money to spend \$900 on independent water testing. They believe that if it was a concern, the DEP would take care of it. It sickens me to think that nothing is being done.

I have since learned that NYC DEP has posted videos on their website, and signs next to public drinking fountains, educating people of the possible contamination from hydraulic fracturing,. and what symptoms to look for.

Our plans for breaking ground on an addition on our home and to have another child have since come to an abrupt halt. That day our world spun out of control. My family physician has never seen Barium poisoning nor do they know exactly what was in the drilling mud that contaminated our well water. They don't know how to treat for these types of illnesses, and they can't give me any indication of what long term affects this may cause on my health.

Our Family is collateral damage!

We are just 1 of the 33% failure rate of these gas companies. The failure to keep the residents of Bradford County's wells contaminate free.

I fear that someday in the distant future our State and County government will "wake up" and realize that the cancer clusters, heart conditions and children with learning disabilities are too frequent to ignore. By that time it is too late!

I get that there's a huge opportunity here for our state and our county... I get that! However, the people need to be the priority. We need to be responded to promptly in case of a contamination, Neighbors need to be notified of

nearby well contaminations and their water testing should be the gas companies' responsibility, not the homeowner. Care needs to be taken that these wells are drilled in the safest way possible, with no regard for the expense on the "poor drilling company." It doesn't have to be this way.

Two years ago drilling began on my grandfather's land on Armenia Mt by a company named Talisman. This company was considerate of my grandfather's wishes, prompt when there was an issue with the well or his land, respectful of his peace, tested all the surrounding water wells before drilling commenced and from what I have been told "Go above and beyond" to ensure their well casings are the safest possible. When My uncle, who lives nearby water well was contaminated with Manganese, they promptly brought him a water buffalo and since that date have now encased his well, preventing any further contamination from the Manganese that was leaching in. My family has only had good experiences with this company. Something I wish I could say about Chief or Chesapeake.

I would like to read an excerpt from Article I of the Pennsylvania State Constitution Sec 27:

"The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and aesthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania's natural resources are the common property of all the people including generations yet to come. As trustee of these resources, the commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the people."

In closing. I would now like to ask my state Representative and my County Commissioners: Why have my Constitutional rights been taken from me?

Chrystal Stroud,
Towanda PA
4-28-11