

For Immediate Release

November 17, 2015

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On National Freedom from Frack Waste Day Groups Call for Override of Gov.'s Veto

Trenton, NJ - Today a Coalition of environmental, labor, community and faith-based groups united at the Statehouse to announce their Freedom from Frack Waste campaign. The campaign calls on Legislators to protect New Jerseyans from dangerous fracking waste by overriding Governor Christie's veto on the ban of its dumping.

Hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, is a form of natural gas drilling that produces toxic wastewater and drill cuttings. Our state is increasingly being targeted for disposal of this unsafe waste and twice the Governor has vetoed a ban on dumping it. Today the organizations came together to urge the Legislature to override the Governor's veto of S1041. This bill prohibits the treatment, discharge, disposal, or storage of toxic fracking waste in New Jersey. We already know of multiple facilities in New Jersey that have accepted fracking waste. This waste is a threat to our public health and our waterways and we need our representatives to take action now.

"New Jersey cannot afford to dump frack waste in this most densely populated state in the nation. Other states are stepping forward in a national push to ban toxic frack waste, joining with New Jersey's Legislature in its forward-thinking frack waste ban bill. We are asking our elected representatives to override Governor Christie's short-sighted veto and be the protectors we need to protect our drinking water and our communities' health," **said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

Fracking waste can contain over 700 different chemicals, including known carcinogens and endocrine disruptors as well as cancer-causing chemicals. Fracking waste also contains harmful naturally-occurring contaminants released from deep underground in the fracking process and brought back to the surface, including radioactive materials.

“New Jersey’s waterways are at risk from fracking waste because of the Governor’s vetoing of the fracking waste ban. Today thousands of people across the country are protesting the dangerous and polluting practices of the natural gas industry. On Freedom from Frack Waste Day we’re calling on the legislature to override the Governor’s veto and stop fracking waste from being dumped in our state. New Jersey has enough Superfund sites. We do not need to be dumped on by the fracking industry,” **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.**

There are also safety concerns with the transportation of the waste in the state. There could be accidental spills as fracking wastewater is being trucked to treatment plants with impacts to local communities, water bodies and groundwater. The hundreds of pollutants in frack waste are difficult and expensive to remove; many of them are unidentified since they are kept secret due to the Safe Drinking Water Act exemption. The waste is highly toxic, contains radioactive and carcinogenic materials and has caused many pollution problems where it has been discharged, such as Pennsylvania. The toxics in frack waste have substantially harmful health and environmental effects.

“Fracking is happening right next door in Pennsylvania and that toxic sludge needs to go somewhere; someday it could be produced right here in New Jersey. It has already shown up in Kearney, Elizabeth and Carteret, and under New Jersey rules, there’s no telling where it will show up next. That’s why we need a ban on fracking waste now. If the Governor won’t put the health and safety of the people of the New Jersey first, if he refuses to protect our water supply--ostensibly on constitutional grounds--then the Senate must act and pass this bill to keep fracking waste from being dumped in our state,” **said Rosemary Dreger Carey, Organizer, 350NJ.**

A NYT investigation found radioactivity in drilling wastewater was sometime hundreds to thousands of times the EPA drinking water standard. New Jersey’s wastewater treatment facilities are not designed to handle the toxins and radioactivity found in fracking wastewater and cannot remove all the chemicals before discharging the waste into our waterways. This could potentially lead to the discharge of dangerously high levels of harmful pollutants into our rivers, groundwater, estuaries, and bays.

"New Jersey's been dumped on enough. That's why this bill prevents dumping frack waste in New Jersey. It's common sense. That's why an overwhelming bi-partisan, veto proof, super majority of legislators voted to ban dumping frack waste in New Jersey not once but twice. That's why this override is especially significant as more Republicans supported it the 2nd time AND AFTER they knew the Governor didn't like it and vetoed it. And that's why we're calling on this override now,” **said Dave Pringle, Campaign Director, NJ Clean Water Action.**

Other states are fracking and looking for somewhere to dump their waste. Fracking waste was already shipped to places in New Jersey including Deepwater, Carteret, Elizabeth, and

Kearny. One New Jersey facility received a violation from the DEP because the radioactivity level in the waste was so high it exceeded their permit.

“We will not stand by and allow our state to be poisoned for profit by accepting unregulated and unidentified fracking waste,” **said Nancy Hedinger, President of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey.** “For the health and safety of our residents, we demand a ban on dumping toxic and dangerous fracking waste; we urge our legislators to do the right thing and override of the Governor’s veto.”

During Hurricane Sandy we saw a number of problems at water treatment plants, resulting in raw sewage and other dangerous materials being discharged directly into our waterways. If we allow fracking waste to be dumped in New Jersey that waste could also potentially reach our waterways in such a weather event. The Passaic Valley Treatment Plant alone spilled over 2 billion gallons of raw sewage into Newark Bay. Other plants in Sayreville, Hoboken, and Union Beach also discharged sewage in the aftermath of the storm, resulting in between 400 to 500 million gallons being discharged across the state. Adding fracking waste to this mix could add over 700 chemicals to the mix.

“Health impacts from fracking waste and fracking are well documented; the precautionary principal must apply to prevent these harmful impacts in New Jersey through a ban on fracking waste here. Our children are counting on us to do everything we can to protect them. The facts are clear and a bipartisan fracking waste ban has been passed twice; our legislature needs to take action to override the Governor’s veto for the sake of our children and the public’s health,” **said Harriet Shugarman, Executive Director, ClimateMama.**

Fracking waste is exempted from critical federal protections regulating the disposal of hazardous waste and hazardous materials. This free pass from important standards increases the risks to public health and the environment.

“Fracking waste remains a clear and present danger for New Jersey’s waterways. A witches’ brew of toxic chemicals shouldn’t be anywhere near our waterways, and the Legislature has a final opportunity to override Gov. Christie’s repeated vetoes of a fracking waste ban,” **said Doug O’Malley, director of Environment New Jersey.** “Banning fracking waste was a bipartisan effort, and now is the time for legislators to stand by their votes to overturn the Governor’s veto.”

Governor Christie has refused to protect our state from fracking pollution, conditionally vetoing a ban on fracking in the state to a weak one-year moratorium that has expired. He has twice vetoed legislation to ban the treatment and disposal of fracking waste in New Jersey. His veto would allow fracking waste to be dumped, stored, and processed in the state of New Jersey.

“It is outrageous that Governor Christie, instead of protecting the people of New Jersey, has violated his oath of office in vetoing this bill because he is standing with Big Oil and Gas against the people of New Jersey. With this veto Governor Christie is opening the flood gates, allowing millions of gallons of toxic waste to be dumped into our waters,” **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.** “Now we need the Legislature to stand up to the Governor and override his veto to protect our waterways from this pollution. If we stand together, we can fight the Governor’s veto!”

Groups at the press conference include The New Jersey Sierra Club, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Clean Water Action, Environment New Jersey, 350.org, League of Women Voters, ClimateMama, and The Mother’s Project.

For more information on frack waste and New Jersey: <http://bit.ly/1MRKonf>

See attached photos of the announcement of the Freedom from Frack Waste veto override campaign.

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