

The Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission  
1120 Lincoln Street, Suite 801  
Denver, CO.

Commissioners:

Since I can not make the trip to Denver I will send a letter to convey my input to new setback rules.

The first point I would like to make is any input from the Colorado Department of Health and Environment should be heavily discounted as they seem to refuse to do the necessary research and study for themselves and rely on critiquing the work of others without their own due diligence. The second point is that their evaluations for permitting of a uranium mill, based on health and environment evaluations and public input, were recently rejected by Colorado Judiciary as being deficient in legal requirements. The CDPHE has also failed in its' duties to adequately address and cause remediation to the years of spillage and plume flows contaminating Sand Creek and Platte River from Sunco properties.

The Colorado School of Public Health at the University of Colorado has studied the issue and reported that people living within a half mile of gas well operations are exposed to 5 times above a federal health standard. This is the study that is available.

The other issues are that at 1000 feet, a blast on a well site is capable of blowing out windows and minor structural damage to buildings. Under a1000 feet, heat radiation becomes a factor in case of intense fire on a pad. If a well has a blow-out with failure of a preventer, a pipe string of many thousand feet can be blown out of the hole into the surrounding area.

This makes two factors – health and safety threats to people in surrounding buildings. The lateral reach of directional drilling exceeds a mile which makes any mineral extraction over a thousand foot possible. The mining laws governing this were written in 1873 and population density and construction has changed greatly – the law needs review. Since this is beyond the purview of the State, that is moot. However, what can be done is local revision and/or implementation to codes that allow condemnation for public benefit. When land owners sell land and retain mineral estate, if public domain of housing, business, or urban living takes place as development, that mineral estate should be forfeit to condemnation with no remuneration greater than that of the lowest nearby lease based on a 30 year production life unless that mineral can be harvested by observing minimum setbacks of half a mile.

There are other setbacks needed. Water ways, rivers streams, lakes and reservoirs need setback protections and/or activity out of flood plains. Pipelines making water crossings should be required to have protective carry off sleeves with adequate receptacle handling.

Humans need, at least, the same consideration given wildlife. Since, by your own count, 8.73 % of wells are within 1000 feet, you will affect less than 10%, on historical average, of new wells.

Sincerely,  
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