

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
Department of Environmental Protection
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DEP ORDERS CABOT OIL AND GAS TO CEASE ALL GAS WELL FRACKING IN SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY

WILLIAMSPORT – The Department of Environmental Protection has ordered Cabot Oil and Gas Corporation to cease all natural gas well hydro fracking operations in Susquehanna County until the company completes a number of important engineering and safety tasks.

“The department took this action because of our concern about Cabot’s current fracking process and to ensure that the environment in Susquehanna County is properly protected,” DEP Northcentral Regional Director Robert Yowell said.

Cabot voluntarily shut down fracking operations at the Heitsman well in Dimock Township on Tuesday afternoon following three separate spills there in less than one week. The company is currently drilling seven new wells in the county that will require fracking.

The order requires Cabot to develop within 14 days an updated and accurate Pollution Prevention and Contingency Plan and Control and Disposal Plan for all permitted well pad sites in Susquehanna County.

The company must conduct an engineering study of all equipment and work practices associated with hydraulic fracturing at all well sites in the county within 21 days.

The engineering study must include a detailed evaluation and explanation of the causes of the three spills that occurred in the past week and establish corrective measures Cabot will use to prevent similar releases.

Within 21 days of DEP's approval of the Pollution Prevention and Contingency Plan, the Control and Disposal Plan, and the engineering study, Cabot must fully implement all of the recommendations and requirements in those documents.

The company also must place the approved Pollution Prevention and Contingency Plan and Control and Disposal Plan in a conspicuous location at each permitted well site and provide a copy to each contractor and subcontractor working at any well site. Contractors and subcontractors cannot begin work at any well site until they receive the two plans.

In a separate enforcement action, DEP issued a notice of violation to Cabot for the third spill at the Heitsman well that occurred Tuesday morning. The violations noted are nearly the same as in DEP's Sept. 22 notice of violation issued to Cabot for the two spills last week.

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