



## YOUR HELP IS URGENTLY NEEDED by August 31st

The EPA is accepting Public Comment on their proposed new Particulate Matter rules. It is important that they hear from people living near frac sand mines, who are potentially exposed to rising levels of BOTH Particulate Matter and the carcinogenic respirable crystalline silica (Silica Dust).

- Many readers in places where hydraulic fracturing is occurring could also be exposed to elevated or rising levels of these two pollutants - silica dust and Particulate Matter. You are also urged to comment! ( [OSHA NIOSH Issue Hazard Alert- elevated levels of silica at fracking sites](#) )

### WHY ARE STRONGER STANDARDS NEEDED?

"EPA reviewed thousands of studies as part of this review of the standards, including hundreds of new studies published since EPA completed the last review in 2006. The new evidence includes more than **300 new epidemiological studies, many of which report adverse health effects even in areas that meet the current PM2.5 standards.**"

Please submit your comments to the EPA by **AUGUST 31, 2012, SUPPORTING the STRONGER Fine Particulate Matter Standards (lowering the allowable PM2.5 concentration to 11 or 12 mcg/c3).**

**Also, urge EPA to not shortchange rural areas when it comes to air monitoring and visibility standards.**

You may write your own comment. Writing your own comment allows you to mention frac sand mining, silica dust, and the special concerns you have about air quality in "Frac Sand Mining" areas.

**HELPFUL GUIDE to help you write your Comment:** [Earth Justice - Talking Points](#)

**Please email comments to:** [a-and-r-Docket@epa.gov](mailto:a-and-r-Docket@epa.gov)

Copy and Paste < **Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2007-0492** > in the subject line.

If you are pressed for time, you might use the [American Lung Association](#) "already prepared" comment, that you may quickly sign and submit through their website.

"Stronger standards can save up to 35,700 lives and prevent 1.4 million asthma attacks and 2,350 heart attacks each year."

American Lung Association

"The EPA estimates that a reduction to 12 micrograms/cubic meter would save between \$2.3 billion and \$5.9 billion in health costs. *Annually.*"

American Lung Association

*How are fugitive dust control measures at sand mining facilities near you working?*

### CHIPPEWA COUNTY AIR MONITORING STUDY DELAYED

At the August 21, 2012 extra meeting of the County Board, **a resolution seeking funding for an air quality monitoring study was considered.** The Board decided to delay this project one year, placing it on the 2014 Capital Improvement Projects list.

*Does your town have ordinances requiring mining companies to monitor the air for Particulate Matter levels?*

## NEWS ALERT

From the *Wisconsin Journal Sentinel*, August 28, 2012, by Lee Bergquist - [Sand miners band together; Mining operations in state form association, hire lobbying, PR firms](#)

"Four companies have formed a state association to represent Wisconsin's fast-growing and controversial sand mining industry.

The Wisconsin Industrial Sand Mining Association on Tuesday said it will tout a message that sand mining is a boon to the economy and can operate without harming the environment.

The group has hired a Madison lobbying firm with ties to former Govs. Tommy G. Thompson and Jim Doyle, a public relations firm and a law firm.

It hired Capitol Consultants, headed by William J. McCoshen, a former secretary of commerce, chief of staff and gubernatorial campaign manager for Thompson.

Also tapped: a public relations executive with Democratic ties, Evan Zeppos of the Laughlin Constable firm, and Michael Best and Friedrich for legal matters.

"We thought it was time for us to come together and be a voice for the industry," said association president Rich Budinger, regional manager of Fairmount Minerals, which in Wisconsin operates as Wisconsin Industrial Sand Co.

Other companies in the group are Badger Mining Corp., Berlin; U.S. Silica Holdings Inc., Frederick, Md.; and Unimin Corp., New Canaan, Conn. Other companies are being solicited to join."

**WISA's Website:** <http://wisconsinsand.org/>

"WisconsinSand.org is the online home of the Wisconsin Industrial Sand Association (WISA) – an organization formed to promote safe and environmentally responsible sand mining standards, promote a fact-based discussion and create a positive dialogue among the industry, citizens and Wisconsin government officials."

"As leaders of the state's sand mining industry, WISA is focused on working cooperatively with state and local governments and others to help develop effective and scientifically based safety, health, environmental and land-use standards. Our members follow a mandatory **Code of Conduct** with strong principles and tough standards that guide the Association's efforts to be a leader in fostering a healthy, safe and **environmentally responsible** sand mining industry in Wisconsin. WISA and its members will work to show that there are many positives when taking the right approach to sand mining. With a proper balance between sound operations, adherence to responsible regulations and good relationships, we can operate safely and protect the environment while generating significant economic impact."

**From the *Wisconsin State Journal*, by Karen Rivedal - [Four sand mining companies form group to set mutual 'code of conduct'](#)** "Downsized DNR compliance units have been challenged keeping up with the industry growth, especially in dust oversight."

**Will this new group support a stronger DNR, with adequate staff to ensure standards are met and enforced?**

**WISA contact, PAK MAIL box in Eau Claire, WI:** 2809 E. Hamilton Ave., #161 / Eau Claire, WI 54701-6863 715-497-3749

## NEWS ROUND UP

You may like to compare the audio information with the extensive written article:

Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism - *The economic impact of the frac sand industry in Wisconsin* <<http://www.wisconsinwatch.org/download-content/download-sand-economics/>>

WPR, August 16, 2012, THE WEST SIDE (AUDIO) - *Sand Economics* :  
<[http://wpr.org/regions/eau/tws/twsarchives\\_2012.cfm](http://wpr.org/regions/eau/tws/twsarchives_2012.cfm)>

**CHIPPEWA FALLS** - An agenda item from the Plan Commission meeting held Aug. 20: "Consider request from EOG to amend C.U.P. # 08-05 by enclosing sand piles with 180' x 78' high domes."

Is there a concern for respirable crystalline silica blowing off the sand piles?

**LADYSMITH** - *The Ladysmith News*, August 24, 2012 by Luke Klink: [\*Railroad derails its own plan to close Corbett Avenue crossing\*](#)

- Railroad officials wanted a street crossing closed, but that plan has been withdrawn. It would have required a partial filling of Corbett Lake and a lengthy permitting process. Closing the street would have allowed the trains to travel at faster speeds through town.
- Klink explains in his article, "The current wye just north of Corbett Avenue is rated for a 10 mph maximum speed and the requested new wye would have allowed trains traveling between 25 and 30 mph, reducing traffic congestion on nearby roads. Trains up to a mile long at slower speeds could block crossings for 7 minutes or more, delaying motorists and police, fire and medical responders."

Citizens in Chippewa Falls and New Auburn have experienced waiting times for frac sand trains that far exceed 7 minutes. What are the experiences in your area? What can citizens and communities do to protect public safety and welfare with such increases in train traffic?

**BARRON CITY** - Reprinted in the *Bloomer Advance*, August 23, 2012, by Bob Zientara of the Barron News Shield: [Barron County: Barron, Cameron negotiate railroad crossing closings](#)

- Canadian National Railroad wants Barron City to close three of their city streets that cross the rail, now that the rail line there is being re-activated to haul frac sand.
- City Officials and residents are learning that they have little say, since railroads are federally regulated.
- City officials are concerned closing all three crossings will send too much local traffic right past the school. Negotiations are continuing.
- CN is saying local use of the railroad right of way will have to stop
- The city will have to fund rail crossing arms or lights if they want them, not the rail.

**COCHRANE-FOUNTAIN CITY** - *Winona Daily News*, August 23, 2012, by David Brommerich: [\\$23,000 legal fees for Cochrane-Fountain City School District to keep frac sand mining facility out](#)

What are the implications when a school district has to spend this much money to keep a sand plant from locating next to a school? Are lawsuits the only way to make local boards do the right thing? That does not always work either. What IS a proper location for a sand mine or sand processing plant?

***Bloomer Advance*, AUGUST 22, 2012, by Anita Zimmerman: [Municipalities with sand activity in 2011 have seen significant boosts in equalized valuation.](#)**

Tax issues can be confusing. What do these valuations mean for taxpayers? Are there only positive effects, or some negative? Do costs to towns supercede any tax benefits? Do the increased valuations of the sand mining facilities exceed the decreased valuations of all other kinds of property, like farms and homes? Keep studying these issues.

**POSKIN - *Barron News Shield*, August 15, 2012: [\\$85 million in capital investments in plant and rail Groundbreaking for frac yard](#)**

100 jobs predicted due to this Superior Silica Sands/Canadian National Railway joint effort. Will they all materialize? Will they be full time or seasonal? What is the significance of contracts between sand mining companies and rail lines?

**SAND WILL BE HAULED THROUGH LADYSMITH TO POSKIN - *The Ladysmith News*, by Luke Klink: [Frac sand trains to start hauling through Ladysmith in November](#)**

"Ceremonial golden spikes were driven home Aug. 13 at a new frac sand mine being constructed 40 miles west of Ladysmith, symbolizing the first contract Canadian National has for hauling frac sand through the city of Ladysmith. In front of an audience of 200 people, CN and Superior Silica Sands announced a multi-year agreement to transport frac sand from a new 85-acre sand processing plant and rail storage facility adjacent to CN's Barron Subdivision near Poskin. The plant is projected to be operating Nov. 15."

**TOWN OF ARLAND AND ALMENA - Reprinted in the *Bloomer Advance*, August 23, 2012, by Bob Zientara of the Barron News Shield: [Barron County: Frac sand mining could last 30 years](#)**

- Superior Silica Sand, 340 acre sand mine plus wet plant in Town of Arland
- Midwest Frac, 80 acre sand mine in Town of Arland and Almena

Please read article for volumes of topsoil to be removed and sand mined and sent away.

**ALMA, BUFFALO COUNTY - *Twin Cities Daily Planet*, August 14, 2012, by Carol Inderieden: [Seven Sands frac sand mine permit postponed](#)**

"The three-person Buffalo County Board of Adjustment tabled a conditional use permit for the Seven Sands frac sand mine and wash plant (see [Frac Sand or Farmland](#)) at a public hearing on Thursday, August 9 in Alma, Wisconsin. The hearing lasted six hours and included expert testimony by consultants hired by Glacier Sands, the company that would operate the mine, as well as attorneys representing the Cochrane-Fountain City School District and John and Nettie Rosenow. The Rosenows are dairy farmers who own property in Buffalo County, Wisconsin next to the proposed mine, about 25 miles north of Winona, Minnesota. They are also the proprietors of Cowsmo Compost, a popular compost and potting soil business that sells to organic gardeners and farmers in the Twin Cities area."

"At least 150 people turned out for the hearing and more than 40 testified. Seven Sands' landowners, friends and family members, wearing lime green "Sand = Jobs" t-shirts, voiced unconditional support for Glacier Sands and its proposed mining operations. Other speakers expressed a wide range of concerns from environmental issues effecting the health, safety and welfare of the community to problems associated with potential damage to highways, bridges and county roads."

**ALMA, BUFFALO COUNTY - Dane101.com, August 14, 2012, by Christie Taylor: [Frac sand mining debate fractures a community](#)**

"It was a visibly divided crowd, with several dozen wearing bright yellow (and sometimes gray) shirts with the logo of Glacier Sands, the mining company that would operate the Seven Sands mine, printed on the front, and "Sand = Jobs" on the back. Speakers were cheered by like-minded attendees at the conclusion of their three minutes of testimony."

"Several pro-mine speakers compared the sand to a crop that the landowners had every right to "take to market," just like corn or milk. Linda Baecker said her family was "drowning in debt," and the mine would be a "life preserver."

"Bob Baecker, one of seven landowners applying for the permit under the name Seven Sands, said he hoped his land would be easier to farm after the reclamation process the company is promising to carry out after the sand has been mined from a particular spot. The steepness of the land currently encourages topsoil erosion, he said. "Our soil ends up in the Gulf of Mexico," he explained. "We're just taking some sand out of the hill." "

**TOWN OF DOVRE, BARRON COUNTY** - Chieftain Sand And Proppant operates here. Residents are reporting deprivation of their sleep, health, peaceful way of living, wetlands and the value of their home. Will residents be "recapitalized?"

**August 15, 2012, PE HUB :** [Energy Capital Recaps Chieftain Sand and Proppant](#) - "Energy Capital Partners ("ECP" or "Energy Capital") today announced the completion of a recapitalization of Chieftain Sand and Proppant, LLC ("Chieftain Sand") on July 25, 2012. This is the first investment from Energy Capital's Mezzanine Opportunities Fund."

## **FRAC SAND IN NORTH DAKOTA?**

- FROM Chippewa Herald - [North Dakota could produce 'frac sand' for oil industry](#)
- FROM Leader Telegram - [North Dakota seen as source of frac sand](#)

### **Crowd hears WI man's experience - From the Rochester Post Bulletin, Red Wing....**

Minnesota Crowd in St. Charles hears about Wisconsin man's experience with silica sand mine - Post Bulletin ( People from St. Charles visited Chippewa Co. It was a learning experience! )

### **Destroying Precious Land for Gas - from the New York Times....**

**This could have been written about our experiences with frac sand mining in Wisconsin – similar issues, practices and promises from the MOG (Mining-Oil-Gas) companies.**

**Frac Sand Seminar in Twin Cities:** <http://www.d.umn.edu/prc/workshops/SSworkshop.html>

Some interesting speakers will be presenting, including the former vice-president of Conoco Phillips.  
**PLEASE note the bus tour on the last day, possibly coming to a mining location near you!**

We are all searching for solutions. This suggestion may have merit, but questions should be asked, such as will those dollars come back to the local communities? or, will they stay in Madison? Who should have the taxing authority for this kind of plan?

**Our property is vibrating:** a short mining story you will want to read!

Can you imagine how the quality of living has deteriorated under these conditions?

We have lights glaring in our windows from sundown to sunrise. We hear the banging, beeping and other heavy equipment and industrial sounds. Our water quantity and quality remains to be determined. The air quality is another unknown.

Now our property is vibrating! The vibration we feel from the machines is something we hadn't thought of. It isn't as obvious when moving around but you can still feel it. However...when sitting still in the house or trying to sleep you can feel your chest and eardrums vibrating. It is an uneasy, uncomfortable feeling.

This isn't something we can get rid of by shutting windows or drawing shades. There isn't anything we can do to stop this vibration.

**READ THIS AND ASK YOURSELF: WHY is NIOSH saying sand should NOT be moved by conveyors at the fracking fields, yet conveyors are allowed here in Wisconsin?**

**Like Working in a Refinery: Fracking's New Chemical Hazards for Workers** - JULY 24, 2012 BY **DAVE FEHLING**

"In **air samples** taken at a drill site in the Eagle Ford Shale late last summer, investigators found silica dust levels exceeding government safety standards in half of the eight samples taken. In one sample, silica levels were over 10 times the safe limit .....

**NIOSH and the oil and gas industry are working on modifications to the equipment that moves sand from rail cars to trucks and finally to tanks at the well site. Covering up access ports, using augers to move sand instead of conveyor belts, and something as simple as watering down roads where the fine sand has spilled might reduce the dust inhaled by workers."**

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*Welcome to the Frac Sand Sentinel, a newsletter highlighting resource links, news media accounts, blog posts, correspondence, observations and opinions gathered regarding local actions on, and impacts of, the developing frac sand mining and processing industries.*

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