

# Frac Sand Sentinel

*...keeping watch on the industry*

**Issue: #20**

**DATE:**

**July 31, 2013**

**A PRESS RELEASE FROM MIDWEST ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATES**

## FTS Frac Sand Mine Air Pollution Permit Challenged: Stronger Permits Needed To Protect Public Health

Jul 29, 2013

On July 24, Midwest Environmental Advocates filed a petition for a contested case hearing on an air pollution control permit for a frac sand mine in Trempealeau County, Wisconsin. The action was filed on behalf of ten petitioners who are concerned about the public health impacts of mining-related silica dust.

The petition asks the Wisconsin State Division of Hearings and Appeals (DHA) to review the permit issued by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to FTS International, LLC (FTS) which would allow the company's frac sand mine to discharge particulates and nitrogen dioxide in amounts that violate federal and state air pollution standards. The DHA would have the power to modify the permit or send it back to the DNR to require the agency to issue a permit that protects public health.

"Before frac sand mines even break ground, air pollution control permits outline how a mining company must follow the law and what powers the DNR has to enforce air protections in the future," said Staff Attorney Sarah Williams. "We need our state's DNR to issue strong pollution permits in order to protect our health. Wisconsinites living near an increasing number of frac sand mining and processing facilities are in jeopardy of exposure to harmful silica dust. The health risks are just too great."

Before the FTS permit was approved, many local citizens wrote letters of opposition to the DNR or expressed concerns about the health of their family members and livestock at a public hearing on the draft permit. But the DNR ignored their concerns and approved an air pollution control permit that had no meaningful changes to better regulate air quality.

The DNR also did not consider the cumulative impact of silica dust from this and other nearby mine sites. The explosive growth in mining for silica sand across Trempealeau County is putting citizens' health at risk. There are 26 permitted or proposed frac sand mines in the county. In the Town of Arcadia, there are eight mines in a five-mile radius. The volume of existing and potential mining activity in Trempealeau County causes area residents to have deep concerns about air quality and their health in addition to water depletion and pollution, destabilized land values and quality of life issues.

Midwest Environmental Advocates is a public interest organization that uses the power of the law to support communities fighting for environmental accountability. Learn more about the Midwest Environmental Advocates on the web at [midwestadvocates.org](http://midwestadvocates.org), like MEA on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Midwest-Environmental-Advocates/56715630702> or follow @MidwestAdvocate on Twitter <https://twitter.com/#!/MidwestAdvocate>.

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