

Water Watch Wednesdays

Wednesdays in September at 6pm

Sept 2, 2020

In Our Backyard

By the ACWW Team: Mardy, Justin, Lisa, Sarah



Ashtabula County Water Watch since 2012

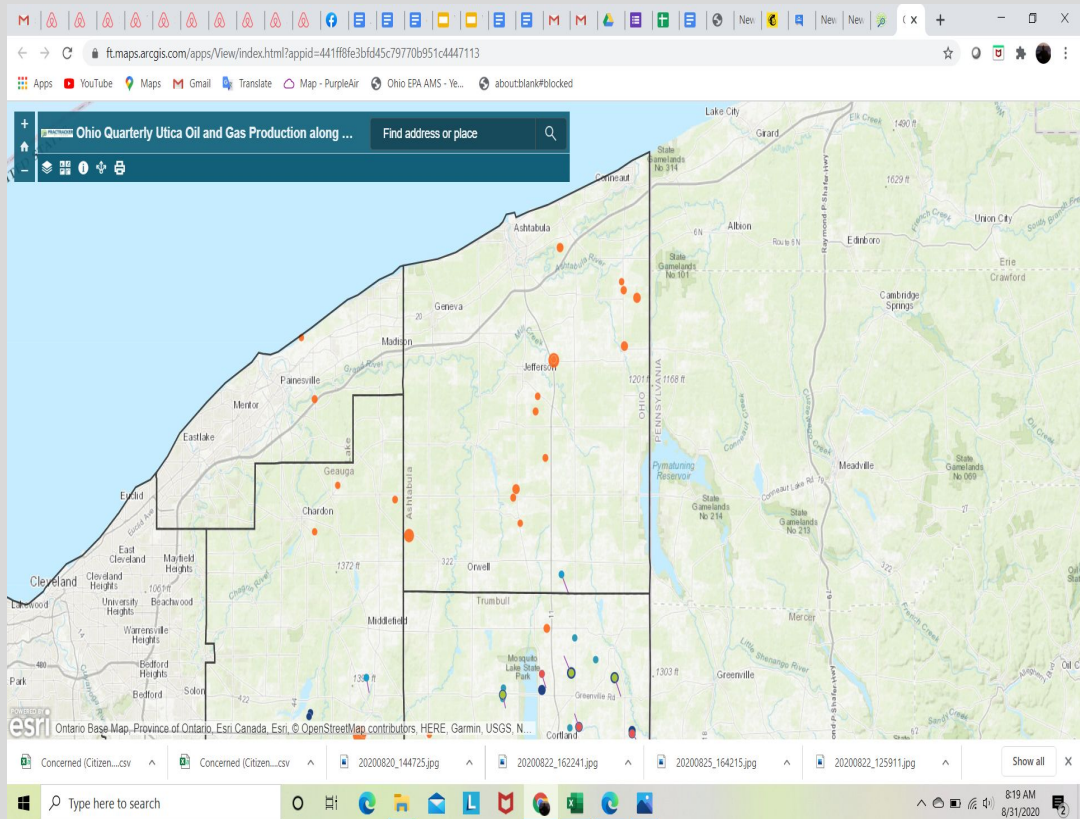


Injection wells in Ashtabula County

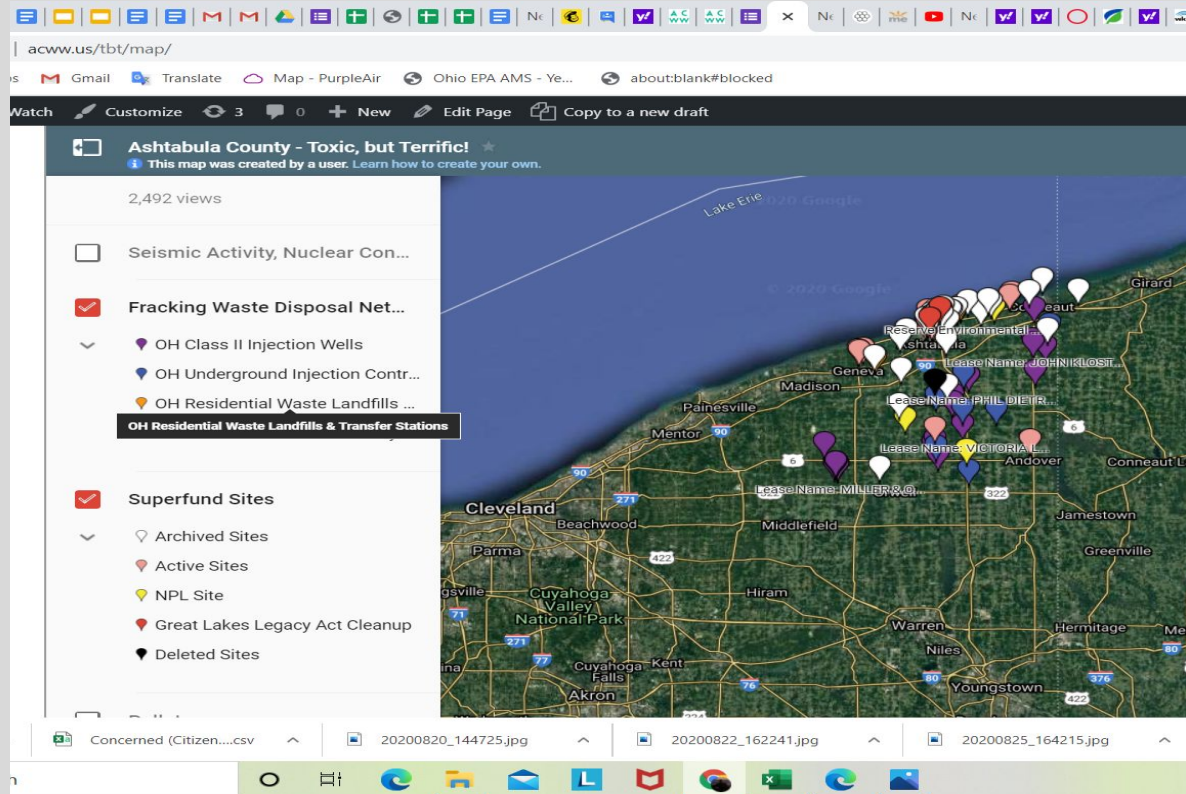
14 active injection wells in Ashtabula County

8, 126, 184 barrels from 2010-2019

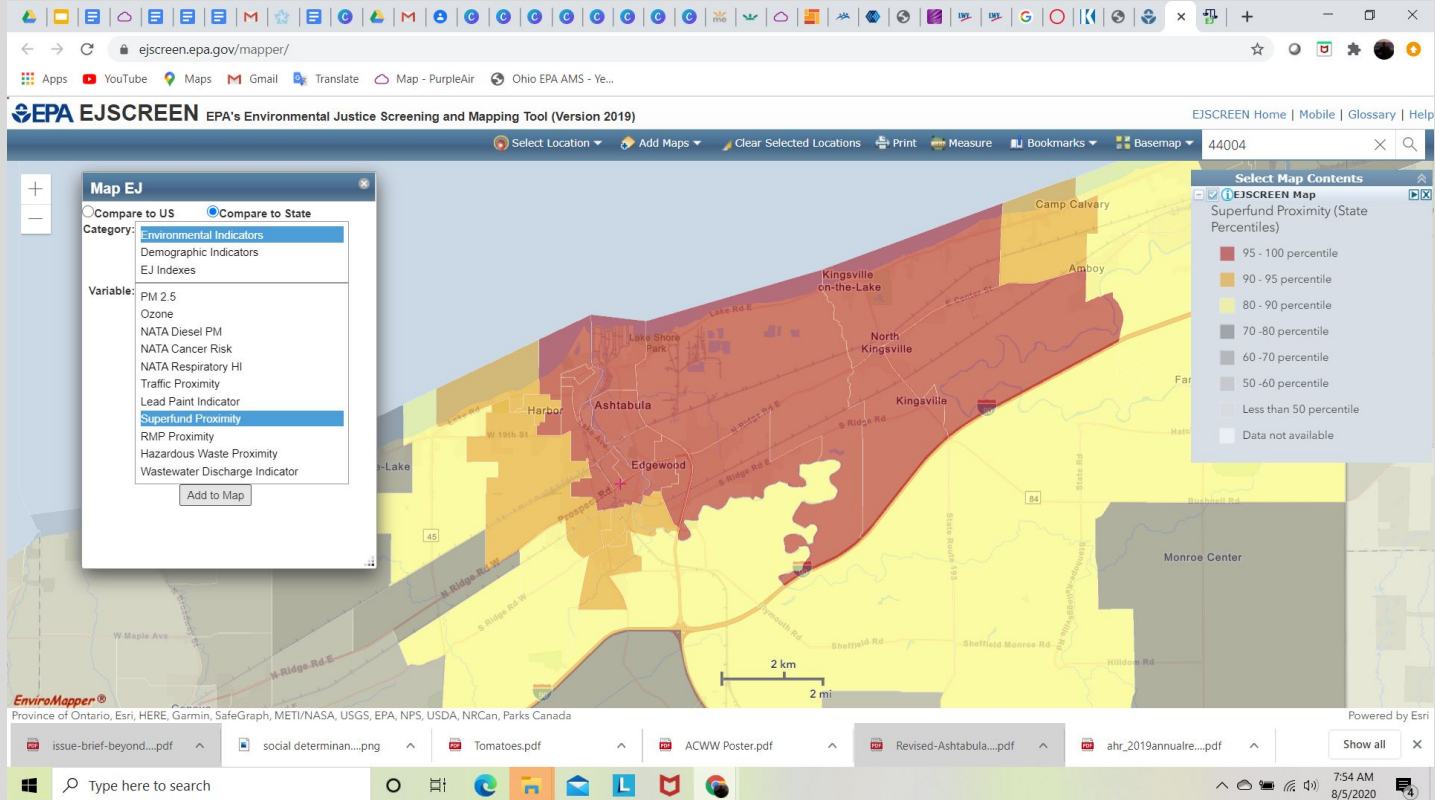
= 341,299,728 gallons
disposed into our county



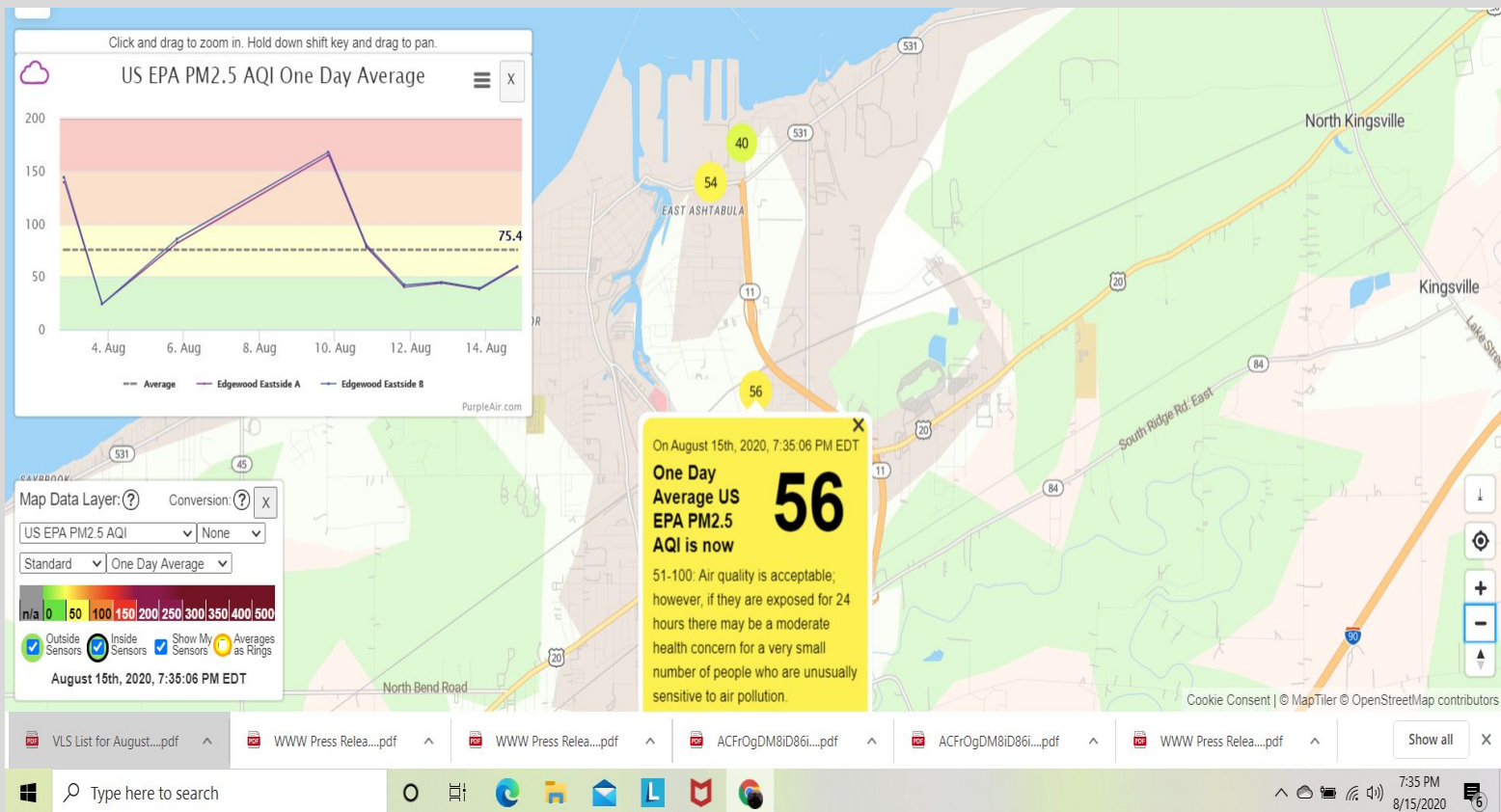
www.ACWW.us and interactive map on site



EPA Environmental Justice Screen



Purple Air Monitors



Ashtabula's Industrial Legacy

Means Legacy Pollution

The Promise of Prosperity through Industrial Revival



ASHTABULA HARBOR 1950'S



Cleveland Cliffs Hot Briquetted Iron Plant in Toledo

And Why We Need Community Rights to Ensure a Future for Healthy People and Ecosystems

Ashtabula County History

- Ashtabula region has long history of indigenous inhabitants and was important hunting grounds - “river of many fish”
- Northwest Indian War was a campaign to drive indigenous people from the area and Treaty of Greenville 1795 ceded most Native American lands in Ohio to the United States
- Between 1890s and 1920s, Ashtabula Harbor was the world’s largest iron ore receiving port and was then surpassed by Conneaut Harbor -
- A city and county of immigrants
- Finnish, Irish, Swedish, Italian immigrants

Chemical Industry

- Nearly 50 chemical facilities operating in the Fields Brook watershed starting in 1940s
 - Union Carbide's Electromet facility (later Elkem)
 - National Distillers
 - Mallory-Sharon Titanium
 - Detrex Chemicals
 - General Tire and Rubber
 - Reactive Metals Inc.
- Many produced materials for use in World War II and remained post-war as part of the "Chemical Shore" dreamed up by Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company
- Products included carbide, metal alloys, industrial solvents, uranium rods for weapons development
- Took advantage of poor ethnic communities on east side of River - Many immigrants from Southern Appalachia came for Jobs - connection to Appalachian culture and plight

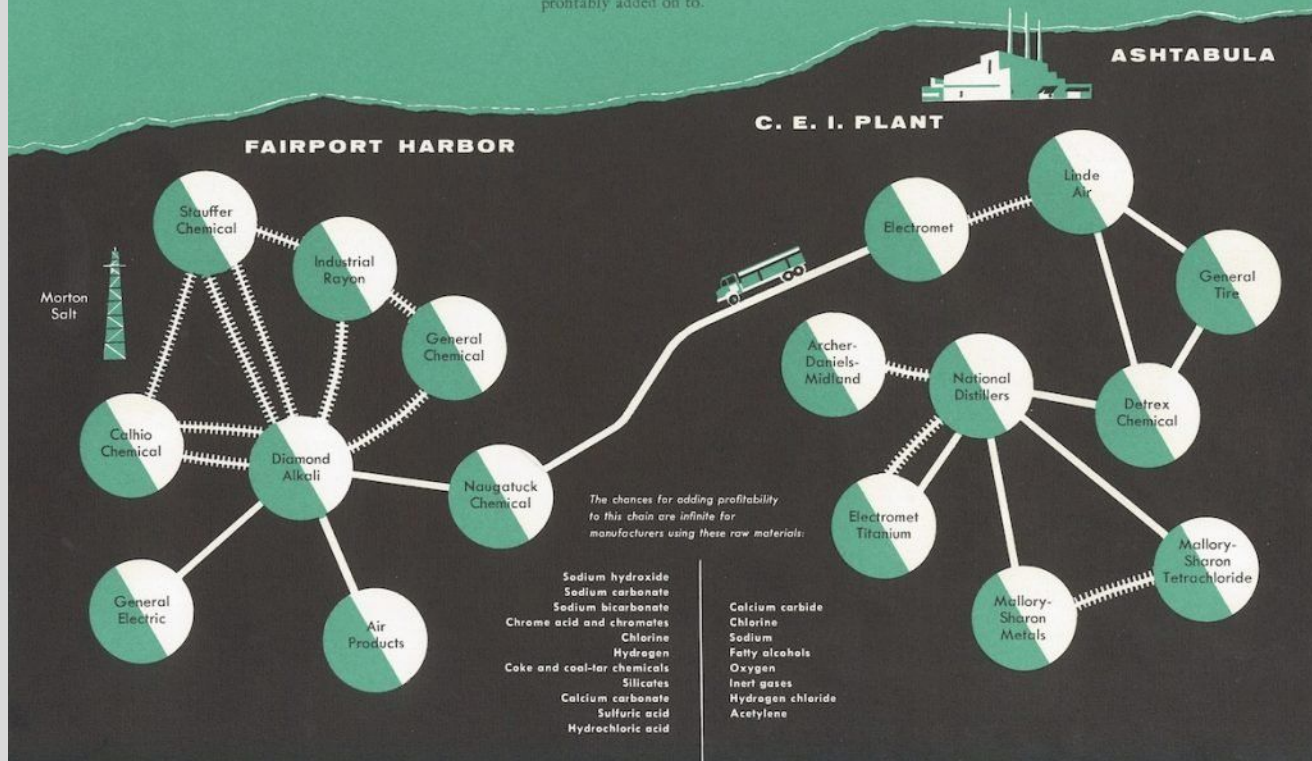


Ashtabula's Chemical Shore

... A region of dynamic
chemical growth

Chemical production efficiency at its highest, is Ashtabula's fabulous Chemical Shore, a neat, self-sustaining system of chemical exchange via pipeline and rail. For users of certain raw materials, it can be readily and profitably added on to.

These chemical giants which surround the busy Port of Ashtabula and constitute a \$400-million complex prove the superb location and other natural advantages offered to industry in the Ashtabula area.

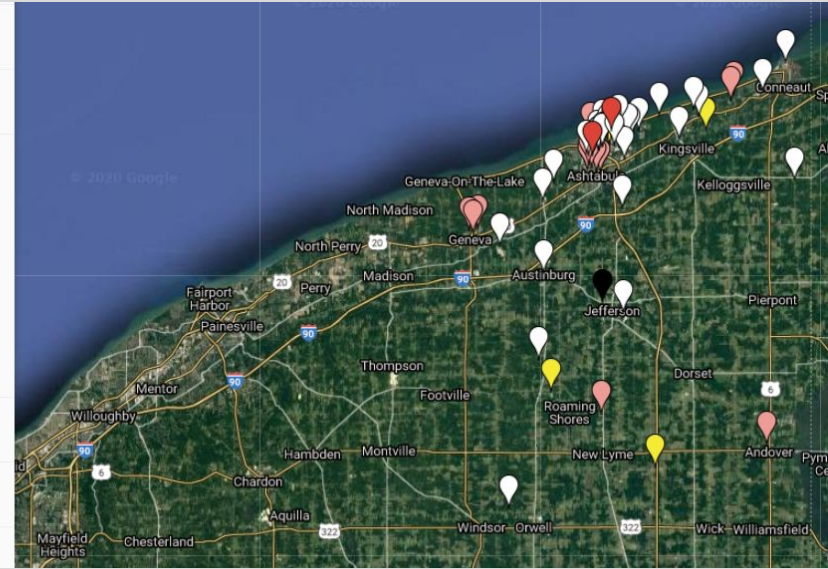
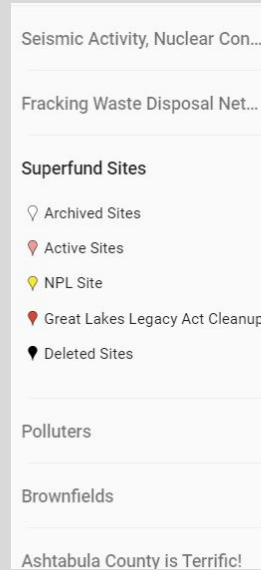


Environmental Fallout: Contamination

- Companies operating with almost no environmental oversight for many years
 - Clean Air Act 1963
 - US Environmental Protection Agency 1970
 - Clean Water Act 1972
- Contamination of Fields Brook, Ashtabula River, and Lake Erie with:
 - Heavy metals such as lead, zinc, and mercury
 - polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs)
 - Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
 - Volatile organic compounds (VOCs)
 - pesticides
- Cleanup of Ashtabula River in 2006-2007 piled and capped toxic river sediments off of State Road, but Fields Brook still remains on National Priorities List

Environmental Fallout: Superfund Sites

- Many Superfund sites in city and county - Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act - 30% taxpayer funded
- Superfund sites in Ashtabula County:
 - 32 archived - many “cleaned” and capped - waste taken to Geneva and Kingsville Landfills - groundwater contamination still a problem
 - 13 active
 - 3 on National Priorities List
 - Fields Brook
 - Old Mill in Rock Creek
 - New Lyme Landfill
- ALS cluster of 7 people in Conneaut near 2 active Superfund sites and an undocumented dump site



Environmental Fallout: Sacrifice Zone

- EPA's EJScreen Mapping Tool shows that parts of Ashtabula rank very poorly against national standards for air quality, proximity to toxic waste sites, and cancer risks
- “A sacrifice zone or sacrifice area (often termed a national sacrifice zone or national sacrifice area) is a geographic area that has been permanently impaired by environmental damage or economic disinvestment, often through locally unwanted land use”
- These zones are most commonly found in low-income and minority communities



Economic Fallout: Boom and Bust Cycles

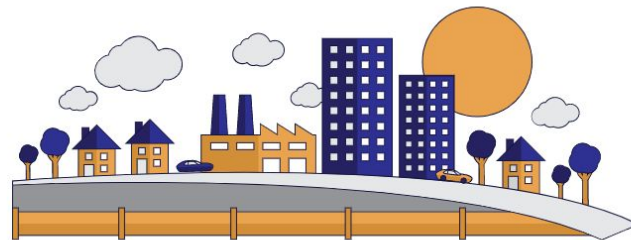
- As part of the “Rust Belt,” Ashtabula County has experienced major declines in industry and manufacturing leading to high unemployment, low property values, and high poverty rates
- Boom and bust cycles are built into our system of capitalist industrial development
- In Ashtabula, the loss of cheap energy and tighter environmental regulations caused chemical companies to move operations and jobs elsewhere, leaving behind environmental devastation and externalizing environmental destruction to other areas

Cheap Gas and Ashtabula's Industrial Revival?

- Construction of Risberg natural gas pipeline from Meadville, Pennsylvania to North Kingsville was completed this summer
- Many public officials and local business people are promoting the pipeline as key to restoring economic growth to the area through industrial development
- Proponents of industry claim that natural gas is “clean” energy because it burns cleaner than coal
- However, a large proportion of this gas will be obtained through hydraulic fracturing which is extremely detrimental to public health and the environment

Supplying domestic energy to support local economic growth.

ACCESS TO NEW NATURAL GAS SUPPLY WILL ALLOW THE ASHTABULA AREA TO REVERSE DECADES OF LOST OPPORTUNITIES AND ATTRACT NEW BUSINESSES AND JOBS.



New Risberg Pipeline will make new manufacturing possible in Ashtabula County



Along the quiet streets in northeastern Ohio, a big problem for Scott Strayer, Cristal's Vice President of Manufacturing and Mining, is pretty clear.

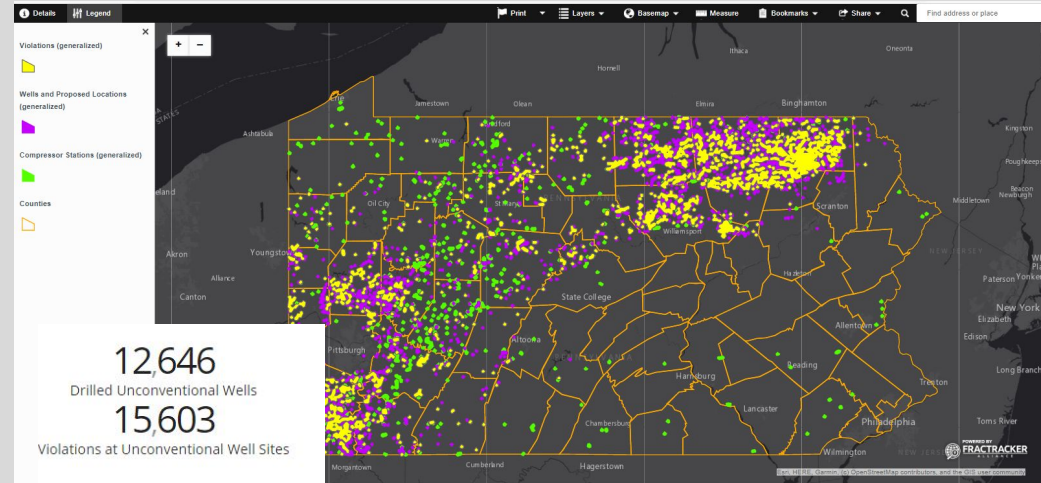
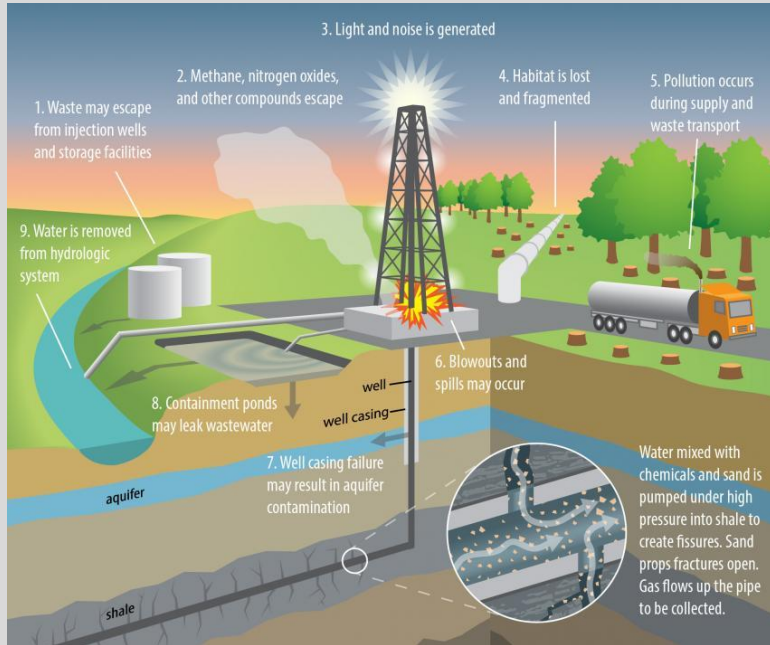
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15,000mm BTU/d



Hydraulic Fracturing Fueling Ashtabula's Industrial Revival



Fracking Waste: Injection Wells and Brine

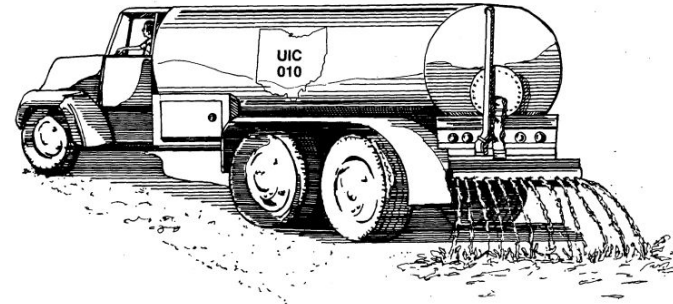
- Class II Injection Wells for disposal of “brine” from oil and gas production
- 15 active in Ashtabula County, 225 in Ohio
- Brine spreading common on rural roads - high levels of radium 226 and 228 in some brine samples evidence



Shalelogix injection well in New Lyme which has disposed of over 800,000 barrels of fracking waste between 2010 and 2019

SPREADING OIL-FIELD BRINE FOR DUST
AND ICE CONTROL IN OHIO

A Guidance For Local Authorities



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF MINERAL
RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Environmental Regulation = Legalized Pollution and Degradation

- Oil and gas industry exempt from Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 - exempts disclosure of fracking chemicals
- Partially exempt from National Environmental Policy Act, Resource Conservation Recovery Act, and “Superfund” tax
- Under Clean Air Act thousands of tons of hazardous waste emissions permitted every year
- Municipalities and counties almost powerless to stop polluters from entering communities

Community Rights: a Path to Resilient Economies and Environmental Justice

- Communities can amend city and county charters to ban injection wells and other polluting industries
- Grant Township, PA passed a charter banning a proposed injection well - sued by the state DEP and ordered to pay over \$100,000 in legal fees by a federal judge - state appeals court overruled the DEP which finally revoked the permit



- Toledo, Buffalo and other towns along Lake Erie amending charter with “Lake Erie Bill of Rights,” - restricting polluting activities that damage lake ecosystem



Shifting the Economic Paradigm: Wellbeing Economics

- Global capitalist economy based on GDP growth - infinite growth with finite resources
- Peak oil - renewables not able to keep pace with growing energy demands
- Wellbeing Economic model focuses on holistic management of resources and prioritizing health, happiness and environmental regeneration as indicators of success - drastically reducing resource use and growth, reusing resources and materials
- For Ashtabula County, development areas include sustainable forestry and building with local forest products, sustainable agriculture and diversifying local crops, tourism along Lake Erie, repurposing and reusing abandoned buildings and materials, assessing potential for renewable energy, city-wide composting

How can I get involved?

www.purpleairmonitor.org

www.ACWW.us

VOTE and ASK QUESTIONS OF CANDIDATES!

Plant a tree

Join a local activist group - do something!

See full list of ideas on www.ACWW.us under the Water Watch Wednesdays tab