



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

4 WEST 43rd STREET, SUITE 615, NEW YORK, NY 10036
PHONE: (212) 725-3541 • FAX: (212) 725-3443
WWW.LWVNYC.ORG • OFFICE@LWVNYC.ORG

The League of Women Voters of the City of New York Background Information on Intro 446-A Health Concerns Addressed by this Legislation

The unhealthy reactions, illnesses and diseases caused by exposure to toxic hydraulic fracturing fluids in drinking water inspired many to join the anti-fracking movement. It caused the League to form an Environmental Action Committee. Now the concern is to prevent those in New York City from exposure to the toxic and radioactive hydraulic fracturing wastes coming from Pennsylvania and upstate New York. Surprisingly New York State accepts fracturing waste from Pennsylvania into some landfills even though New York State has a ban on high volume hydraulic fracturing. The State also permits spreading some of the brine in liquid form on our roads for de-icing or other applications. New York State treats the waste as industrial not hazardous even though the waste is known to be highly radioactive from certain Pennsylvania wells.

Methane (CH₄) is the primary component of natural gas. Those exposed to methane in its gas form in high concentrations may have difficulty breathing, especially in confined spaces. Decreased oxygen can cause suffocation and loss of consciousness. It can also cause headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, and loss of coordination. Skin contact with liquid methane can cause frostbite. You can be exposed if you live near an oil or gas field, landfill, and wastewater treatment plant. This would be especially true if natural gas and oil wastes from hydraulic fracturing were accepted in landfills or wastewater treatment plants. Proponents of this bill wish to prevent this.

Natural gas, in its original state, contains radon and benzene, chemicals known to the State of California to cause cancer. It also contains toluene, a chemical known to the State of California to cause reproductive harm. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. after smoking; unhealthy exposure to benzene can cause leukemia. High bromide levels in oil and gas drilling waste byproducts are highly corrosive to equipment and can react during water treatment to form brominated trihalomethanes linked to bladder and colon cancers and are associated with birth defects; once added to drinking water supplies, they are difficult and expensive to eliminate. Intro 446-A will prevent exposure to radon, benzene, high bromide levels and other toxic chemicals and metals (arsenic, lead, chromium, mercury) carried in the hydraulic fracturing wastes accepted into our wastewater treatment centers or landfills.

So what are the health dangers of fracking waste byproducts in road salt? If New York City road salt came from hydraulic fracturing, it would contain some of the radioactive radium-226 and radium-228 (known carcinogens.) Radium-226 emits gamma radiation, which can travel fairly long distances through air; it is linked to anemia, cataracts and



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

4 WEST 43rd STREET, SUITE 615, NEW YORK, NY 10036
PHONE: (212) 725-3541 • FAX: (212) 725-3443
WWW.LWVNYC.ORG • OFFICE@LWVNYC.ORG

bone, liver and breast cancers. The road salt also could contain unhealthy chemicals used and produced by hydraulic fracturing, some of which just mentioned. Intro 446-A if passed will prevent purchase of road salt from hydraulic fracturing and exposure to its toxic chemicals when used on our roads to seep into our surface and groundwater and evaporate into our air. Those living and walking nearby including our pets will be protected by this legislation.

Intro 446-A will protect those who live, work and visit New York from exposure to unhealthy chemicals from hydraulic fracturing into the future. The League of Women Voters of the City of New York congratulates Councilman Steve Levin and the City Council for creating this comprehensive bill. The League highly recommends its passage.

###

About the League of Women Voters of the City of New York

The League of Women Voters of the City of New York (LWVNYC), a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The LWVNYC is celebrating 97 years of Making Democracy Work® at every level of government. In 1920, the League was founded as an outgrowth of the movement that secured women the right to vote to help new voters engage with their government. Today, the League empowers all voters to improve their local, state and national government. Visit www.lwvnyc.org to learn more.

“Like” the LWVNYC on Facebook. Follow us on Twitter: @LWVNYC.