



Is Public Comment Period End of Fracking Review?

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(Source: Jason Weinstein)



The 30-day public comment period which began today is part of the 90-day extension the state DEC is using to finish its fracking review. That 90-day period ends February 27th - a date pro-gas supporters say will be the finish line in the battle to bring fracking to New York.

"For many this means the process of implementing regulations to proceed with the SGEIS and drilling in New York is almost done," said Scott Kurkowski, attorney for the Joint Landowners Coalition of New York.

Not surprisingly, those in favor of keeping the moratorium on fracking disagree.

"That's wishful thinking on a level that's unsupported by the facts," said Walter Hang of Toxics Targeting.

Hang says three things have to happen for the state's fracking review to end: it needs to finish its health review, complete the Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement, and complete the rule making for fracking.

"So it's an extraordinarily challenging scenario where all three of those bureaucratic hurdles would be surmounted," said Hang.

Fracking opponents criticize what they call the private nature of the state's fracking health review.

"We're not going to stop fighting until we get this Dr. Shah and three panelists to be able to face the public and answer questions," said Binghamton Mayor Matt Ryan.

"There have been health studies done in other parts of our country and other parts of the world and so there are no glaring health impacts that are popping out to anybody else in the world and we suspect that will be true when the Health Department completes its review," said Kurkowski.

The public can mail or e-mail comment to the DEC until January 11th.

****In Binghamton, Jason Weinstein, Fox 40 HD News****