

March 3, 2026

Shippingport Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m. (EDT)
Shippingport municipal building

Remarks by Elan Justice Pavlinich regarding public health impacts of forthcoming data centers in Shippingport, Pennsylvania

Good evening. My name is E.J. Pavlinich, communications manager of the Environmental Health Project, a Pittsburgh-based, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization committed to defending public health from the risks of oil and gas development.

Data Centers, particularly those powered by fossil fuels, represent health risks to nearby communities due to air pollution, light pollution, noise pollution, and water waste. Because the next phase in developing these data centers is for the Shippingport Borough Council to consider noise limits during construction, I will not go into detail about the ways in which data centers powered by gas [emit significant pollutants](#), such as nitrogen oxides, [methane](#), volatile organic compounds, and [fine particulate matter](#)—pollutants that are proven to be [harmful to human health](#). Nor will I mention the recent [model projections](#) that U.S. data centers nationwide may cause approximately 600,000 asthma symptom cases and 1,300 premature deaths, which may result in \$20 billion in public health costs.

Instead, I will limit my focus to the noise pollution for which data centers are responsible, since that will be the council's focus in the next phase of development. The construction sites will be loud during the initial building of the data centers. But once they are complete and functioning, diesel generators plus heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems [create a constant hum](#). This constant hum will be heard by nearby residents. Case in point: sounds [above 85 decibels are harmful](#) to human hearing; data centers may generate [noise levels](#) that [exceed 90 decibels](#).

The long-term impacts of noise and light pollution, to which Shippingport residents will be exposed, include hearing loss, stress, insomnia, and decreased quality of life. Not to mention, because these data centers will be powered by gas, pollutants travel for miles, affecting the air quality for Beaver County residents more broadly.

As a Beaver County resident, I understand concerns about economic development, but history indicates that investments in more oil and gas infrastructure, such as gas-powered data centers, will not yield a long-term, sustainable economy. Most data centers will operate largely [“autonomously, \[so they do not\] produce many lasting full-time jobs.”](#) Beaver County is no

stranger to the [promises made by industry giants](#) that have led to [economic disappointment](#): Shell Polymers (a.k.a. the Beaver Cracker Plant) is a prime example of a large oil and gas facility that has [not delivered the boon expected for the region](#).

These data centers will cost Shippingport residents specifically, and Beaver County residents more broadly, in diminishing job opportunities; increased health hazards, and thus increased medical bills, coupled with missed days of work and school; compounded by an environment that is tarnished by air and light pollution, with a chronic hum that impedes quality of life for the community.

If these data centers must be built, then developers ought to use renewable energy sources, such as wind turbines and solar panels, instead of fracked gas, out of consideration for neighboring communities who will unfairly shoulder the health costs. Barring an investment in renewable resources, and thus an investment in the health and safety of Beaver County residents, the data centers should be held accountable for reporting their emissions and they should be responsible for developing an emergency preparedness plan for the community in the event of an industrial accident.

Thank you.

Elan Justice Pavlinich, communications manager
Environmental Health Project

About the Environmental Health Project

The [Environmental Health Project](#) (EHP) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit public health organization that defends public health in the face of shale gas development. EHP provides frontline communities with timely monitoring, interpretation, and guidance while engaging diverse stakeholders: health professionals, researchers, community organizers, policy makers, and others.