

WE CHOOSE HEALTH

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EWING SARCOMA: HOW MUCH PROOF DO WE NEED?

Many of you have seen the stories in the Observer-Reporter or the Post-Gazette. You've heard about it on any number of TV or radio news shows. We are facing a menace called Ewing sarcoma, a rare type of childhood bone cancer. It's so rare that fewer than 250 cases nationwide are diagnosed each year.

Yet, in the Canon-McMillan school district, at least 6 cases of Ewing sarcoma have been diagnosed in the past 10 years. Two were in the past year alone. Three young people have died. As many as 11 others in the area have been identified as having other similar forms of cancer. Seven of those are current students and two are preschoolers – all living in the Canon-McMillan school district.

This unusual incidence of cancer isn't confined to Washington County. In neighboring Westmoreland County, at least 12 cases of Ewing sarcoma have been diagnosed in the past 8 years.

Many believe that shale gas operations are the culprit here. Are they? The industry, of course, says "no." The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, which lacks adequate personnel and testing expertise, doesn't really say one way or another. The Pennsylvania Department of Health isn't sure. So, who gets to say? Who's right?

With the public currently in the dark with few to no answers, **EHP will be hosting a community discussion on Tuesday, June 18**, that will bring together residents and experts to talk about the issue of childhood cancer in the region, how being exposed to environmental pollution may play a part, and where we might go from here.

Please join us at Bella Sera (414 Morganza Road, Canonsburg) on Tuesday evening, June 18, from 6 – 8 p.m. to hear from a panel of concerned residents and various experts regarding the troubling rise of cancers in our region. Light refreshments will be served.

For more information, contact EHP at 724-260-5504, or RSVP at bit.ly/EHP-Community-Meeting.

A NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

We are in the midst of a truly beautiful spring here in southwestern PA, and I hope many of you have enjoyed newly budding trees, flowers, and springtime bird songs. That lovely springtime growth is marred by a troubling shadow. Regularly we learn that our air quality is not the best, as I have seen too many "unhealthy for sensitive populations" air quality alerts this spring. And the darkest shadow by far is the growing number of childhood cancers haunting our most precious and vulnerable population, our children.

Many of us in SWPA delight in outdoor activities. Sadly, this simple joy is robbed from us when nearby compressor stations, well pad activity, non-stop truck traffic, lights, noise, and air pollution taint the outdoors in unacceptable ways. EHP strives every day to document health concerns, minimize residents' exposures, and educate ourselves, health care professionals, and impacted residents on how to safely live side by side with industrial activities from shale gas development. Please join us at a number of events this spring to work towards a brighter, cleaner future for all our region's residents. In good health,



Through the generosity of people like you, EHP's work has made a difference in the lives of many in the SWPA community and beyond. Your gift allows us to provide access to accurate, timely and trusted public health information and services associated with UOGD. [Donate now](#)



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ATTENTION! WASHINGTON AND WESTMORELAND COUNTY RESIDENTS

Are you concerned about how fracking can affect your health and that of your family? Then the reports below are for you! At the end of each report, there are steps you can take to reduce that impact.

Inside the reports you will find:

- The scope of fracking in your county
- Which air pollutants are present, and in what quantities
- Health problems due to exposure
- Types of exposure, and what you can do to avoid exposure



Washington County Health Risk Assessment

- ✓ [Washington County: Lessons Learned \(Fieldwork Report\)](#)
- ✓ [How Fracking Affects Your Health: Washington County \(Community Report\)](#)
- ✓ [How Fracking Affects Your Health: Washington County \(Community Summary\)](#)

Westmoreland County Health Risk Assessment

- ✓ [Westmoreland County: Lessons Learned \(Fieldwork Report\)](#)
- ✓ [How Fracking Affects Your Health: Westmoreland County \(Community Report\)](#)
- ✓ [How Fracking Affects Your Health: Westmoreland County \(Community Summary\)](#)

Stay tuned for more county reports!

INTERACTIVE LEARNING FROM HOME

Be informed, prepared, and involved when industry is your neighbor!



Collecting data and documenting health and environmental violations can be daunting. You may feel discouraged and simply give in to the industry's narrative that there is nothing you can do to stop it. But that's not true! Knowing how to properly document health and environmental violations and report them to the proper authorities gives you a leading edge in protecting yourself.

The law has laid out a series of steps you can take in order to gather sufficient documentation. These steps can seem complicated at first, but this webinar gives you a simple process of documentation that you can replicate.

After watching our [webinar](#), you will be able to collect data and documentation for health and environmental violations and report them to the proper authorities.

Featured Research Reviews

Here at EHP we know that it can be tough to get your hands on peer-reviewed literature and even tougher to understand the scientific jargon within it. We also know that information is power!

[Featured Research Reviews](#) will feature summaries of recent and relevant studies clarifying the impact that shale gas development has on health.



Check out our first post, "[Researchers see an association between unconventional natural gas development and hospitalizations for skin issues and genital/urinary issues.](#)"

Follow us on social media!



MEET OUR NEWEST TEAM MEMBERS



**Sarah Rankin - MPH, BSN, OCN
Public Health Nurse**

Sarah Rankin received a BA from Penn State University before completing her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Pittsburgh. She worked as an oncology nurse and nurse manager at UPMC Shadyside and Hillman Cancer Center for nine years before completing her Master's in Public Health through the University of Florida. Concentrating on epidemiology and environmental health during her graduate studies, Sarah completed an internship with EHP during the spring of 2018. In January 2019, Sarah officially joined EHP.



**Hannah Blinn - MSUS
Environmental Health Fellow**

Hannah Blinn received a BA in Environmental Studies, with a focus in global health and food studies, from Allegheny College and her Master's of Sustainability from Chatham University. During her time at Chatham, Hannah completed a semester-long internship and a year-long thesis project with EHP focused on assessing exposure measures and their ability to predict symptom reporting in individuals living near shale gas development. After graduation, Hannah officially joined EHP for a year-long fellowship funded by a Pittsburgh Foundation grant. Her work through the fellowship involves conducting Health Impact Assessments with communities living near these developments as well as working on the Environmental Health Channel's data delivery tools.

CHECK OUT OUR NEWEST HANDOUTS

- ✓ [How Close is Too Close? Why You Should Care about Setback Distances from Shale Gas Operations](#)
- ✓ [Mental Health in Communities with Unconventional Oil and Gas Development \(UOGD\): A Summary for Health Care Providers](#)
- ✓ [Risks from Liquid, Sludge and Solid Waste from Shale Gas Development](#)
- ✓ [Risks to Water from Shale Gas Development](#)
- ✓ [Why You Should Be Concerned About Living Near a Compressor Station](#)

ON THE ROAD...

You may have seen EHP sharing at...

- A Better Vision for the Valley Conference at Wheeling Jesuit University, WV
- EHP's Current Safety Assessment Report and Long-term Monitoring Plan in Sullivan County, NY
- Fossil Fuels: Impacts on Health, Wildlife, and the Environment at the Unitarian Universalist (UU) Church of the South Hills
- Greene County Health and Fracking Presentations in Rogersville and Waynesburg
- Medical Symposium: Health Impacts of Oil and Gas Development in Fort Collins, CO
- Shale Gas, Petrochemicals, and Health at the Community College of Beaver County
- The Problem with Plastics and What We Can Do About It at the UU Church of the South Hills
- What Can You do When Fracking is Your Neighbor in Marianna

...and many other places!

REMINDER

The Environmental Health Project provides **FREE** services for residents in Southwest PA affected by fracking.

Contact us at 724-260-5504 for air and water monitors, or to schedule an appointment with a health professional.

Follow us on social media!

