



September 4, 2019

Ms. Gillian Beach, Sanitarian  
Jefferson County West Virginia Health Department  
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Ms. Beach,

Thank-you for speaking with Ms. Susan April yesterday and today about the standing water and possible seepage of septic or water issues at North Jefferson Elementary School in Kearneysville, WV. My organization, Rural Agricultural Defenders (RAD) [www.radwv.org](http://www.radwv.org), has been monitoring the worsening conditions along the western easement and playground areas of the school since the construction and installation of the Jefferson Utilities, Inc. waterline began this past spring.

As I mentioned on the phone call, parents of students at the school as well as neighbors in the Fox Glen community have also been watching this pond develop in front of the school and are very concerned. Since school began August 19, 2019, there have been instances of children playing in the wet conditions that exist close to the well head in the fenced-in play yard in the back of the school and coming home with ruined shoes. As of today, the pond is the largest we have seen it and there is considerable breeding of mosquito larvae. The odor is also significant and the dark color is troubling.

Attached to this formal complaint and request for inspection, we are sharing with you the correspondence we have had with the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP), who did send an inspector to the site on Aug. 28, and had a follow-up with the owner of JUI (permittee of the DEP construction stormwater permit), Lee Snyder.

WVDEP mentions in their email to us that they agree with an approach that involves the Jefferson County WV Health Department. Beyond violations to the permit. We are concerned for the health and safety of the students and the general NJES community. The location of the ponding water in front of the school is worryingly close to a large sinkhole remediated by

Jefferson Utilities Inc (JUI) at some point during the spring/summer. We are concerned that the lack of fencing of any kind (including permit-prescribed slit fencing) around this pool of water, located near to a possibly unstable sinkhole, is a recipe for disaster. Additionally, the pooled water has become a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Within a short time, the larvae will hatch and children at recess may be exposed to mosquito-borne illness.

We are less certain what could be occurring in the school play yard and we hope that you will be able to answer questions with your inspection and dye testing. Please see the attached photo of the school yard which shows the locations of the wet area in relation to the wellhead (the well head is circled in white). On the ground observers have mentioned that the water appears to be seeping up from the ground (as opposed to run-off pooling). We are concerned that this seepage could point to leaks or breaks in the waterline or well equipment, or possibly an issue with NJES's waste water system which we understand involves an injection well.

As school has already begun, and parents and teachers are growing ever more concerned, we trust you will inspect the pond and the wet areas on the school ground as soon as possible. We look forward to the results of your investigation.

Sincerely,

Giuliana A. Brogna

Treasurer, Rural Agricultural Defenders

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