

City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska

Monday, April 6, 2015

Regular Meeting

Item Reports⁷

Council to consider sending a letter to the Oil and Gas Commission regarding the disposal of wastewater in Sioux County.

Staff Contact: Rick Kuckkahn, City Manager

On behalf of the Scottsbluff City Council I would like to thank the Oil and Gas Commission for their careful consideration of the deep well injection project proposed in Sioux County, NE. I am sure the Commission understands the quality of drinking water continues to degrade for a variety of reasons. The cost to the City has increased dramatically over the years, in part due to needs in treatment and delivery. As a result Scottsbluff is dedicated to protecting our water resources from any new sources of potential contamination.

We understand this is not the first well of this type as there are thousands. While leaks and dumping have been cited in the regulatory process, the numbers of violations do not seem to indicate specific problems in the process nor does experience suggest contamination migrating to unpredicted areas.

We are concerned with the long term impacts. Given the infancy of this method of disposal, our primary local concern is the down-gradient location of the City of Scottsbluff's drinking water well site. This is a relatively new and very expensive investment in our community's long term future. We need to see and understand the factual evidence to assure ourselves there is no reason for alarm. We are confident that the complete chemical analysis and geomorphology data are part of the proposal.

By way of this letter we are requesting that information be forwarded to our City Clerk.

We again appreciate the opportunity to inform the Commission of our questions and concerns and trust that the "pause" in processing the permit will give us time to carefully examine the facts and reach a limited risk solution.