

SUNSET REVIEW

FOR

TEXAS RAILROAD COMMISSION

Public Comments by Charles E. Morgan. P.E.

Citizens for Environmental Clean –Up (CEC)

I will introduce a new issue that must be addressed and assigned to the Texas Railroad Commission: Control of Noise. Since the Railroad Commission (RRC) currently regulates oil and gas operations and drilling as well as facilities, pipelines and equipment appurtenant to pipelines, we request the Sunset Review Commission recommend a state noise bill assigning regulation of noise emitted by oil and gas operations and facilities to the RRC. A proposed Noise Bill is included in my attachments.

The Need: Although the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) was tasked by a federal law in 1972 to develop noise control parameters, no one is regulating noise in unincorporated areas of the States because the federal authority was delegated to cities and states in 1982. Only six states picked up that authority. Texas was not one of them. Cities have noise authority within their boundaries. But Low Frequency Noise (LFN) travels five to eight miles and into cities thus affecting city residents as well as people residing in the counties.

The Problem: Our people are dying, our bodies damaged while in the womb till we reach the tomb. Fort Worth, Texas has numerous babies with brain damage while in the womb as well as low birth weight. There are 4,200 gas wells in Tarrant County having a gas compressor station for every 42 gas wells on average. Our children are being affected while just living within their homes. Two children and their father living near my home in Freestone County, Texas had their ear drums ruptured about the same time mine were ruptured. I was diagnosed with brain damage in 2007 after three days of severe LFN in my home caused by a nearby (0.9 miles distant) gas compressor station with eleven, 1,340 horsepower compressors. There are 130 gas compressor stations within Freestone County supporting 3,058 gas wells. Four adults in Freestone County have been killed by the LFN. Noise meter readings at their homes varied from 85 decibels (dBC, Environmental Scale) to 101 dBC. The EPA limits are 55 dBA, hearing

range scale. In the low frequency range (below 500 cycles per second) the intensity of noise doubles for every three decibel increase.

Noise effects are not just to our hearing. It is a whole body pathology according to the Human Development Center in Lisbon, Portugal. They named the noise effects Vibro Acoustic Disease (VAD). The symptoms are numerous. Each of our body systems operate at a different low frequency. When the body system low frequency noise limits are exceeded, bad things happen.

We estimate 2,314,304 persons are being affected in the 27 counties having more than 1,000 gas wells each. Eighty percent of our 254 counties in Texas have gas wells and compressors.

We must protect our citizens of Texas by regulating the noise in unincorporated areas of the state. We think this should be assigned to the RRC since the oil and gas facilities generate the LFN.

Thank you for the opportunity to present these comments.

Attachments:

1. Vibro Acoustic Disease: The need for a new attitude toward noise
2. Low Frequency Noise Limits, Testing Parameters and Health Effects, July 2012
3. Texas counties with 1,000 or more Gas Wells
4. Picture of Compressor Station Site
5. Map of Freestone County Compressor Stations in 2009
6. Proposed Noise Bill for Texas
7. Twelfth International Congress on Sound and Vibration – Paper 584

I agree to have these comments released to the public.

Charles E. Morgan, P.E., Inactive