



DAMASCUS CITIZENS FOR SUSTAINABILITY  
CLEAN WATER, AIR AND LAND ARE BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS



Press Release – for immediate release

July 30, 2012

**Radon New York City: 16 Block Associations, more Legislators, Manhattan BP, Businesses and NYC Residents Join the Concern over Radon for Dinner!**

**...Asking Speaker Quinn Again for Hearings on Radon in Marcellus Gas Coming to NYC**

Block associations representing 16 block associations, both separately and as larger associations, more businesses, legislators and individuals on learning of the risks and unanswered questions regarding radon coming into New York City homes and businesses with Marcellus gas have joined the call for City Council hearings on these matters. They have joined the original over 50 organizational signatories to the [LETTER to Speaker Quinn, sent June 1](#), “for her assistance in holding joint hearings of the Committee on Environmental Protection and the Committee on Health as soon as possible on an environmental issue with very serious potential public health implications – the potential for exposing every New York household that uses natural gas to dangerous levels of cancer-causing radioactive radon.” The Greenwich Village Block Associations in [their sign on](#) asks for these hearings and a public discussion on the NJ-NY Expansion Project, also known as the Spectra Pipeline, “as this project potentially represents a separate threat to our safety.”

Damascus Citizens for Sustainability(DCS) and NYH2O did not receive a reply so we have sent a [second letter](#).

From the first letter, “The consequences of introducing Marcellus shale gas into domestic natural gas markets in New York City could create a public health emergency, the potential for which neither the current City Administration nor Con Ed is taking seriously. It is the absence of such a systematic evaluation of whether Marcellus shale gas will be distributed in New York City and the lack of any formal assessment of the public health risks of doing so that has led us to turn to the Council for leadership and support on this issue.”

Gas from Marcellus wells has more radioactivity in it than any other area and will arrive quickly so there is little time for decay of the radioactivity to happen in transit. Jeff Zimmerman, DCS and NYH2O attorney said, “Frankly, it’s astounding to me that the government agencies that are charged with protecting the health and welfare of the public have not woken up to the fact that the same natural gas that is supposed to be less polluting when burned is actually going to cause more lung cancer in epidemic quantities. Radon is the 500 pound gorilla sitting in the corner that everyone wants to ignore but that isn’t going away. Our letter to the City Council is a wakeup call for action. We need to take this very seriously starting right now before this highly radioactive gas shows up in every gas stove in the metro area.”

As Bill Borock, President of the Council of Chelsea Block Associations put in his letter endorsing the request for hearings,

“[Even after a] lively discussion...we did not get all the answers and lots of questions remain as to what if any dangers we New Yorkers might face if the pipelines come to fruition.

As a consequence of the uncertainty about this very important issue, the Council of Chelsea Block Associations is asking you [Speaker Quinn] to arrange for the appropriate City Council committees to schedule and hold hearings so that these very important health and energy issues can be addressed by the appropriate experts.”

Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, New York State Senator Tony Avella (11th Senate District) in Queens and Assemblyperson Deborah Glick (66 Assembly District in Manhattan), have added their voices to request hearings, joining New York State Senator Jose M. Serrano (28th Senate District) and New York State Assemblypersons James Brennan (Assembly District 44) and William Colton (Assembly District 47) who are signers on the first letter.

The groups that have signed the letter are businesses, environmental, civic and residential and represent thousands of New Yorkers. More endorsements for holding hearings on this important issue are still coming in. “We cannot ignore the health consequences of high radon levels coming into peoples’ homes. A hot meal is not supposed to mean radioactive!”, said B. Arrindell, Director of Damascus Citizens. She continued, “Children are most susceptible to radon damage – we have to look into this issue and we are looking to Speaker Quinn for leadership.”

Workers in kitchens, plumbers and even subway workers may be exposed to high levels of radon or decay products (lead and polonium) that are also dangerous.

What are the actual hazards? Only a hearing will bring out the details and impacts, and we are sure, further questions.

For an informative article on Radon hazards see NY Times article <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/29/opinion/the-radon-threat-is-still-with-us.html>

NYH2O and Damascus Citizens for Sustainability (DCS) will continue to collect signatures via email [dcs@DamascusCitizens.org](mailto:dcs@DamascusCitizens.org) [See all endorsements.](#)

*In their fifth year, environmental advocacy groups, NYH2O and DCS both began in response to the threat of shale gas drilling in the Delaware River Basin and are dedicated to protecting clean water, air and land as basic human rights and the drinking water we all need.*

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