



BUCKEYE
ENVIRONMENTAL
NETWORK

2020

STOP THE WHITE WASHING OF RADIOACTIVE OIL AND GAS WASTE BRINE



TOOLKIT

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2/3/2020

BRINE FACTSHEET



Radioactive Liquid Waste from Oil & Gas Production



By: Buckeye Environmental Network tm

Ohio Department of Natural Resources tests confirms dangerously high levels of radium 226 & 228 in brine from oil and gas production wells. Brine is used on some Ohio roads as a deicer and dust suppressant, where it may get into the soil, can be tracked into homes, or become airborne as radioactive dust and can contaminate drinking water sources and agricultural products.

SOURCES for brines used on Ohio roads

Brines from conventional, low-volume oil and gas extraction wells can legally be *and are* used on many Ohio roads by some ODOT districts (covering at least 28 counties as of 2019) and by many counties and townships.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Oil and Gas Brine TEST RESULTS

Radioactive levels of **radium** 226 and 228 in brine from 151 oil & gas well samples.

Well Type	# Wells Sampled	Results*
Conventional (vertical, shallow) wells, the old mom & pop wells	118	66 to 9602 pCi/L**
Horizontal (deep) wells	25	173 to 3264 pCi/L
Out-of-state (brine disposed in OH)	8	54.6 to 9798 pCi/L
* Source: Tests completed for ODNR Radiation Safety Section, Division of Oil and Gas, cited in their memos of 1-23-18 and 7-2-18		
** Picocuries: a measure of the intensity of radioactivity; pCi/L reflects the intensity of radioactivity per liter of water.		

Legal Exposure Limits

Ohio Administrative Code sets the legal limit for combined Radium-226 and Radium-228 discharge to the environment to 120 pCi/L. (OAC 3701:1-38-12, Appendix C, Table II) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency drinking water standard for combined Radium 226 and 228 is 5pCi/L. (40 CFR 141.66)

Health-based exposure limits: from *Radioactive elements most commonly detected in drinking water*
Environmental Working Group Tap Water Database 2019 ewg.org/tapwater/reviewed-radiological.php

Element	Primary health concern	Detection level, in picocuries per liter	Health-based limits (based on one-in-a-million cancer risk)	National Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) in pCi/L	Cancer risk at legal limit
Radium-226 & -228	Bone cancer, other cancers	1	0.05 pCi/L	5 pCi/L for combined radium 226+228	7 cancer cases per 100,000 exposed

Health Effects and Dangers of Radium

U.S. EPA and the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Biological Effects of Ionizing Radiation list radium as a known human carcinogen. (ATSDR ToxFAQs) Human exposure results in an increased incidence of bone, liver, and breast cancer. Radium-226 is especially dangerous because, unlike many radioactive isotopes, it dissolves readily in water. When the contaminated water is ingested, the body mistakes Ra-226 for dissolved calcium and deposits it in bones. Radium-226 is thus called a bone seeker. Radium 226 and 228 are the parents of radon gas, a major cause of lung cancer.

USEPA has set a health guideline of zero for all radioactive elements in drinking water. However, federal legal limits for radiation and radioactive contaminants are based on the cost of removing contaminants and don't necessarily reflect exposure levels considered safe by public health and medical officials. Since detection limits (minimum level needed for detectability) of radioactive substances in water are higher than health-based guidelines, even residents of communities with "no detected radiation" may face cancer risks from radioactivity in drinking water.

We have been told over and over that brine spreading is safe because it is from waste produced by conventional wells rather than unconventional horizontal wells. As we suspected all along, this assumption is false; waste from conventional wells can be highly radioactive. Radium 226 has a half-life of 1,600 years, meaning that in 1,600 years half of the radium concentration will still be present. Thus for the highest concentration tested from an Ohio well (9,602 picocuries), the concentration will still be 4,801 picocuries 1,600 years from now.

AQUASALINA

Aqua Salina is a product made by filtering brine from conventional wells and adding an anti-corrosive chemical. It has been sold to the general public as well as to the State of Ohio for use on our roads. For a third time, a legislative bill (HB 545) has been introduced, seeking to protect this product from future regulation.

All samples of AquaSalina tested by ODNR exceeded federal Drinking Water legal limits for combined Ra-226 and Ra-228, averaging 1,731 pCi/L, or *346 times* the EPA standard. The highest concentration found (from a container of AquaSalina purchased from a hardware store in Hartville, OH) was almost 500 times the standard. Ra-226 and Ra-228 radioactivity in all samples also exceeded State of Ohio limits for discharge to the environment (OAC 3701:1-38-12, App. C, Table II, Effluent Concentrations). The combined radium Ra226/Ra228 concentration in all samples of post-production AquaSalina, other than the Hartville Hardware sample, averaged within 10% of each other at 1,578.6 pCi/l. (ODNR Interoffice Memo 7/26/17; pdf at [benohio.org issues page](http://benohio.org/issues))

UPDATE ON AQUASALINA TESTING

In February and March of 2020 the Ohio Department of Natural Resources did split sampling of AquaSalina with Nature's Own Sources. Their conclusion was that the process did not *increase* the concentration of Radium 226 and 228. However, this conclusion is irrelevant — it has nothing to do with whether the levels found are *safe*. They clearly are not! See below for a short breakdown of the concentration.

Table 3 - Summary of DOGRM split-sample results from Table 1 (radiochemistry analysis).

Combined Ra226 & Ra228	Minimum pCi/l	Average pCi/l	Maximum pCi/l
Raw Brine (conventional wells)	1047	3715	9602
Finished Brine (AquaSalina)	901	2510	5628

Table 4 - Summary of DOGRM split-sample results from Table 2 (indirect gamma analysis).

Combined Ra226 & Ra228	Minimum pCi/l	Average pCi/l	Maximum pCi/l
Raw Brine (conventional wells)	1328	3987	9541
Finished Brine (AquaSalina)	1328	3251	7415

- Aquasalina is approved for road use in 224 townships/municipalities in Ohio.
- Ohio Department of Transportation also uses AquaSalina on state roads in 29 counties.

Additional Concerns about the Approval Process for Oil&Gas Brine-spreading

- Approvals authorize multiple applications per roadway and do not have an expiration date.
- The specific batch of oil or gas brine used does not have to be tested for radioactivity.
- Testing for naturally occurring radioactive materials is not required.
- There are no provisions for follow-up monitoring or enforcement of radioactivity in the environment.

Under federal and state Underground Injection Control (UIC) regulations, any waste containing radioactive concentrations exceeding those designated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (10 CFR 20 Appendix B, Table 2, Column 2) must be treated as radioactive and disposed of accordingly. For both radium-226 *and* radium-228 the threshold is 60 pCi/L for a combined threshold of 120 pCi/L. Only legal exemptions for oil and gas industry waste allow this radioactive waste to be both sold as a commodity and used indiscriminately on public roads with no assessment of environmental and public health impacts. Allowing the spreading of radioactive waste in the environment is a serious health issue that must be halted now!

For more info, contact info@benohio.org. Useful background and links at rollingstone.com/politics/politics-features/oil-gas-fracking-radioactive-investigation-937389/ published 1-21-20



House Bill 545 fact sheet



HB 545 will allow cancer-causing “brine” from vertically drilled oil and gas wells to be taken out from under the regulatory control of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (Ohio DNR). If the owners of AquaSalina by Nature’s Own make a one-time paperwork filing showing that this radioactive oil and gas waste has been approved for use elsewhere, they will meet the requirement that will allow them to be free of Ohio environmental regulation.

HB 545 removes and restricts Ohio DNR authority. ODNR will only be allowed to accept limited documentation that would supposedly demonstrate that the product is “not expected to result in damage or injury to public health and safety or the environment.” No proof will be necessary to document that AquaSalina is safe. No warning labels are required stating that the product contains radioactive isotopes, even when it is understood through recent testing, that they exceed safety limits for environmental discharge.

HB 545 will prohibit the chief from future rulemaking that would protect public health or the environment.

HB 545 will not only legalize others to sell radioactive oil and gas waste as a commodity; they also would give bulletproof protection to the drilling industry against liability.

HB 545 will also extend to ORC 1509.222 and 1509.223, which will remove crucial oversight of the transportation and application of the radioactive commodity. No longer would haulers of the radioactive commodity be required to file an annual report on the location, date, time, and amounts of “brine” transported and disposed of at each location.

HB 545 does not provide standards for testing of the product to prove its safety. No chemical disclosure or lab results are required.

HB 545 limits the number of tests the chief can request on a particular product to four tests annually.

ODNR testing results of conventional brine for radioactivity as quoted in the ODNR report

...Advise Nature’s Own Source/AquaSalina that the average radioactivity in AquaSalina **exceeds** the 40 CFR 141.66 Drinking Water limits for combined Ra-226 and Ra-228 by a factor of 300, thus human consumption of any amount of AquaSalina is highly discouraged. (ODNR Interoffice Memo 7/26/17)

Advise Nature’s Own Source/AquaSalina that the radioactivity in AquaSalina exceeds State of Ohio discharge to the environment limits for Ra-226 and Ra-228 as delineated in Ohio Administrative Code 3701:1-38-12, Appendix C, Table II, Effluent Concentrations. (ODNR Interoffice Memo 7/26/17)...

Combined radium Ra226/Ra228 concentration in the Nature’s Own Source/AquaSalina container purchased from Hartville Hardware was the highest identified in this study at 2,491 pCi/l. (ODNR Interoffice Memo 7/26/17)
The USEPA National Primary Drinking Water Regulation, 40 CFR 141.66 limits combined Ra226 and Ra-228 in drinking water to 5.0 pCi/l. All sample results (except the DOT tap water) exceed the regulation. (ODNR Interoffice Memo 7/26/17)

All sample results (except the DOT samples) exceed the state of Ohio discharge to the environment limits for Ra-226 and Ra-228 as delineated in Ohio Administrative Code 3701:2-38-12, Appendix C, Table II, Effluent Concentrations. (ODNR Interoffice Memo 7/26/17)

WARNING! We see House Bill 545 as an industry attempt to deregulate waste fluids from the oil and gas production industry. These wastes have proved to be radioactive at levels well above limits that have been deemed safe. If HB 545 were to pass the Ohio legislature, the public would never know where these radioactive waste fluids from vertical wells have been spread. It will not be that ODNR won’t tell us, they won’t know either! Currently, if a local government wants to spread the liquid waste from the oil and gas industries, they must pass a local resolution and provide that to ODNR, and document the amounts and source locations of the materials. Under HB 545 a local resolution will not be required if the fluids come from vertical wells, and your local elected officials may not even know it is being used.

Contact Buckeye Environmental Network for more information info@benohio.org

Devise a strategic lobbying plan

The strategy is loosely modeled after the board game Clue. Rather than identifying the murder suspect, crime location, and murder weapon, the team will identify legislative targets, lobbying tools, and the stakeholder organization responsible for delivering that tool to that target. So instead of Mrs. Peacock in the library with a lead pipe, it was a family lobbying “Senator Brinepusher” with a phone call. This ensures that each legislator is contacted by all possible stakeholders with all possible tools.

The customizable lobbying tools include:

- ◆ Direct calls and emails from constituents
- ◆ Personal meetings and phone calls with opinion leaders across Ohio.
- ◆ Lobbying days in Columbus.

Advocacy meetings, including legislator meetings, local roundtables inviting legislators to attend, community meetings, and town halls.

These individualized tactics are complemented by a comprehensive media campaign that includes:

- ◆ Facebook, and on highly trafficked web sites. If funding were available, paid media such as advertisements in print media.
- ◆ Earned media such as editorials, letters to the Editor, press conferences, press releases, story pitching.
- ◆ Viral marketing, an online petition, and Facebook and Twitter pages

The team will leverage all the members of their broad coalition to maximize the quantity and quality of the outreach. The team will ensure that each target received a customized package of lobbying “touches” that is likely to be persuasive for their particular issues.

The coalition needs to be instrumental in not only convincing fence-sitting legislators to vote against House Bill 545 (HB 545) and its companion bill in the Senate but also for providing the necessary political cover. Because it is exceedingly difficult to reach all legislators with the amount of correspondence necessary to make the desired impact, the team may have to focus their efforts on the key targets. To these legislators, the coalition needs to not only match the volume of communications that they received from the supporters, but they will also make it clear that the non-supporters represent a much broader and more diverse cross-section of community partners, rather than one or two isolated interest group.

Sample FaceBook Post, Tweets, phone rap

Sample Facebook posts

Will you ask your State Rep to oppose HB 545 today? Urge #Ohio House to stop this Bill that makes #oilandgas waste a commodity: it allows anyone, anywhere to spread #radioactive oil & gas well brine products on roads, sidewalks, and even on steps, making it easy to be transported into people's homes.

☼ Testing of #oilandgas brine by Ohio Department of Natural Resources reveals levels of radium 226 and 228 as high as 500 times background and 300 time the federal drinking water limits:

<https://benohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ODNR-lab-tests.pdf>

► Find your #Ohio Rep:

Who Is My Rep: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/district-maps>

& email: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/house-directory>

◆ HB 545 Summary:

To enact section 1509.228 of the Revised Code to establish conditions and requirements for the sale of brine from oil or gas operations as a commodity and to exempt that commodity from requirements otherwise applicable to brine.

<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-545>

#VoteNO #HB545 #fracking waste

Will you ask your State Representative to become an opponent today?

Sample Tweets

1) Will you ask your State Rep to oppose HB545 today? Urge #Ohio House to stop Bill that makes #oilandgas waste a commodity: allows anyone, anywhere to spread #radioactive oil&gas well brine products on roads, sidewalks.

<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-545>

#Fracking

<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/house-directory>

2) Testing of #oilandgas brine by @ohiodnr reveals levels of radium 226 and 228 as high as 500 times background and 300 time the federal drinking water limits:

<https://benohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ODNR-lab-tests.pdf>

#VoteNO #HB545 ► Find your #Ohio Rep's # & email here: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/district-maps>

#fracking waste

Sample phone rap for grassroots phone calls

General phone call

Sometimes when we don't have a lot of time, it is easiest to make a phone call to our legislator. Again, as with letter writing and emails, there are things to keep in mind:

Be sure to introduce yourself – provide your name and address so your legislator knows you are a constituent. If it turns out they are not available, feel free to speak with one of his or her staff members. They are capable of answering many of your questions and addressing concerns you may have.

Think about what you want to say – sometimes having a written list of talking points helps us remember the most important things. (This can also help if you're nervous.)

- ◆ If there is a particular piece of legislation you are referring to, name the Bill or statute. HB 545
- ◆ Do not ramble in your conversation – keep it short, simple, and to the point. State your reason for calling and what actions you would like to see the legislator take.
- ◆ Don't forget to ask your legislator their view on the position.
- ◆ If you feel talking about the issue further would be beneficial, make an appointment to meet with him or her in their office.
- ◆ Make an offer to provide additional information if your legislator is unsure about voting for/ against a particular issue.

Remember, phone calls are a great way to make a personal connection, share your views, and request a specific action by your legislator. Always be courteous and leave your contact number, so if someone from the office wants to speak with you further, they have a way to contact you.

Sample phone rap or email

"Hi, my name is _____ and I am a voter in Representative/Senator _____ district. I am calling to ask Representative/Senator _____ to oppose HB 545, the radioactive brine as a commodity bill. I am deeply concerned about the spreading of this highly radioactive waste in Ohio communities. HB 545 would allow anyone, anywhere to spread this substance for dust or ice control. This substance can be spread on roads, driveways, sidewalks, and even on steps, making it easy to be transported into people's homes. Testing done by ODNR reveals levels of radium 226 and 228 as high as 500 times background and 300 times the federal drinking water limits. Please tell Representative/Senator _____ to oppose this legislation. We need him/her to be a strong **opponent** of HB 545 and stand to protect Ohioans' health and safety. The health and safety of our communities and our children are more important than one individual's profit.

If your Member of Legislature is opposed, thank them:

"Hi my name is _____ and I am a voter in Representative/Senator _____ district I am calling to thank Representative/Senator _____ for opposing HB 545. There is nothing more precious than the health of my family, and I do everything I can to protect them from radioactive products. Thank you."

Face-To-Face with your legislator

Meeting Face-to-Face with your legislator

If you plan on meeting with your legislator in person, it is imperative that your meeting is productive. In order to have the best discussion possible, you must come prepared and ready to answer questions that your legislator and his or her staff may have. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- ◆ Know your stuff! The more you know what you're talking about, the more prepared and less nervous you will feel. Look at your legislator's past vote on particular issues and know what the opposition is saying about the particular issue at hand.
- ◆ Respectfully express your views. Be kind!
- ◆ Be mindful of the fact that you have a limited amount of time to meet. Legislators are busy, so your meeting should not be much more than 30 minutes.
- ◆ Be sure to develop a strong relationship with the legislative staff as they are frequently the primary point of contact for the legislator.
- ◆ Leave behind informational fact sheets that summarize the points you are making in your conversation with the legislator for future review.
- ◆ Follow up with a "thank you" letter expressing your appreciation for the opportunity to meet with the legislator and his or her staff. Doing this shows regard for the fact that you know how busy they are.
- ◆ Be specific about what you would like the legislator to support – don't just ask for general support
- ◆ Be prepared to answer questions. If you are unsure, don't make up anything. Instead, tell your legislator that you will get back to him or her with more information.
- ◆ Leave behind informational fact sheets that summarize the points you are making in your conversation with the legislator for future review. Be sure these fact sheets are short, straightforward, and clear.
- ◆ Don't forget to give the legislator and staff your contact information for them to be in touch with you later.

DO NOT: Speak in an argumentative manner when in a meeting. Keep it professional. While you may or may not approve of certain aspects of your legislator's political party, do not make the meeting about "party politics." Remember why you are meeting – it's about the issue(s) at hand – not which party is better than the other!

PLEASE REMEMBER

Bear in mind that the legislative process is both slow and fast at the very same time. Sometimes action is needed right away to show opposition/support for a Bill while a vote may not actually happen until many months later. This can be frustrating at times when it seems like nothing is moving forward. It is always good to remember that even if you feel like your letters, phone calls, or emails are not making a significant impact, they are! There are often times many conversations that occur between representatives and their staff and other interest groups that you might not always be aware of, but remember that everyone has an important part to play in the policymaking process.

Sample text for letters to the editor/OP-eds:

OPENING

As a [mom/dad/grandparent, nurse, doctor, etc.], I am very concerned about radioactive products being spread in Ohio communities. I am upset by the enormous volume of radioactive brine being dumped in our communities. I am upset that we have no say in this bombardment since I know that these radioactive isotopes are known to cause cancer.

BODY

List some of your concerns here. You may want to use some of the bullet points included in the “Email to your members” (see below)

CLOSING

I was shocked to learn that under current law, this highly radioactive waste is not treated as such. You cannot simply regulate away the hazardousness, toxicity, and radioactivity of brine. I hope that Representative _____ does the right thing by opposing HB 545, the brine as a commodity bill.

I am urging Representative/Senator _____, to side with the health of his constituents by opposing the brine as a commodity Bill.

TIPS

-Use the points below to guide your opening and closing text.

-Submit your letter or op-ed column to one newspaper at a time. They like to have exclusive access to content and will be more likely to publish it. If your first choice passes, take it to another local outlet.

-Letters to the Editor should not be over 250 words, op-eds not more than 600* words. * Check particular length limits of your local media (some are more generous).*

-Express why you care (you are a mom, a dad, grandparent, health professional) and include a call to action, preferably a local one (asking a legislator to support the Bill or thanking them—include legislator’s contact information).

-Provide your name and full contact information, particularly making clear you reside where the outlet has subscribers. Most newspapers will contact writers before publishing. They will not publish your phone number or email.

How to find your legislators:

◆ Find your #Ohio Rep:

Who Is My Rep: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/district-maps>

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◆ HB 545 Summary:

To enact section 1509.228 of the Revised Code to establish conditions and requirements for the sale of brine from oil or gas operations as a commodity and to exempt that commodity from requirements otherwise applicable to brine.

<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-545>

Email to your members

Subject: Stop Brine Spreading

Ohio State Representative Adam Holmes District 97, has introduced House Bill 545, a bill that would prevent the Department of Natural Resources from ever writing rules on products produced from radioactive oil and gas waste brine. If you remember HB 393 and SB 150 from the 132 General Assembly there was one such product, Aqua Salina. Aqua Salina is a product made by filtering brine from conventional wells and adding an anti-corrosive chemical. Aqua Salina has been sold to the general public, to the State of Ohio and the Ohio Turnpike Commission for use on our roads. Again for a third time, a legislative bill (HB 545) has been introduced, seeking to protect this product from future regulation.

Not only do we need to stop HB 545, but we also need to stop the spreading of brine on our roads, in our communities, and as dust control.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources tests confirms dangerously high levels of radium 226 & 228 in brine from oil and gas production wells. Brine used on some Ohio roads as a deicer and dust suppressant, can get into the soil, be tracked into homes, or become airborne as radioactive dust and can contaminate drinking water sources and agricultural products.

U.S. EPA and the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Biological Effects of Ionizing Radiation list radium as a known human carcinogen. (ATSDR ToxFAQs) Human exposure results in an increased incidence of bone, liver, and breast cancer. Radium-226 is especially dangerous because, unlike many radioactive isotopes, it dissolves readily in water. When the contaminated water is ingested, the body mistakes Ra-226 for dissolved calcium and deposits it in bones. Radium-226 is thus called a bone seeker. Radium 226 and 228 are the parents of radon gas, a major cause of lung cancer.

USEPA has set a health guideline of zero for all radioactive elements in drinking water. However, federal legal limits for radiation and radioactive contaminants are based on the cost of removing contaminants and don't necessarily reflect exposure levels considered safe by public health and medical officials. Since detection limits (the minimum level needed for detectability) of radioactive substances in water are higher than health-based guidelines, even residents of communities with "no detected radiation" may face cancer risks from radioactivity in drinking water.

We have been told over and over that brine spreading is safe because it is from waste produced by conventional wells rather than unconventional horizontal wells. As we suspected all along, this assumption is false; waste from conventional wells can be highly radioactive. Radium 226 has a half-life of 1,600 years, meaning that in 1,600 years, half of the radium concentration will still be present. So for the highest concentration tested from an Ohio well (9,602 picocuries), the concentration will still be 4,801 picocuries 1,600 years from now.

Please tell your Senator/Representative that you are opposed to HB 545 and the spreading of radioactive oil and gas waste brine.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

Writing a Letter to Your Representative

You probably have written many letters before, whether to friends or family; however, writing to a legislative member is a bit different. There are important things to keep in mind while drafting your letter, such as length, format, etc. The more well-written your letter is, the more likely your message will be seen as powerful and lasting. Here are some suggestions to think about as you write your letter.

IDENTIFY WHO YOU ARE.

Let your representative know who it is that is sending them the letter. It's essential that you let him or her know that you are, in fact, a constituent from their region or district. Of course, organizations and agencies can write to representatives as well, but always remember to include your name, address, and telephone number, so he or she can get in contact with you.

ADDRESS LETTER APPROPRIATELY

Always address your letter to "The Honorable" (fill in the name). Depending on who you are writing, you will use a different salutation to begin your letter. For the Ohio legislature, use "Dear Representative *Last Name of Member+" if you're writing to a member of the House of Representatives, and "Dear Senator *Last Name of Member+" if you're writing to a member of the Senate.

KEEP IT SSS (SWEET, SHORT, SIMPLE)

No one likes to read a letter that is so long it loses focus and gets confusing. Letters should not go over two pages in length—one is even better. Your representative will be more likely to respond to letters that are written precisely and with a clear focus. It's useful sometimes to list out or bullet a couple of points you want to make in your letter – not only does it help your legislator follow the letter, but it helps keep you on track when writing. Short descriptions of just a couple of words in bold type at the beginning of a bullet point or paragraph can also help in making your ideas stand out. The more direct you can be in your letter, the better. The first paragraph should state your purpose for the letter, who you are, and what action you would like them to take. The middle of the letter should list the specific issues or concerns you have with just enough detail to make your point. The closing paragraph should once again state what you would like to see happen. If possible, include the numbers/names of specific legislation to which you are referring.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

It is a nice touch to include a personal story in your letter that relates to whatever issues on which you are speaking. While stating facts, it is helpful for you to make your facts come alive when they are attached to a story about yourself or someone you know, and is likely to make your letter more memorable. It is human nature to gravitate toward personal stories. Providing a personal touch to your letter will make it more memorable. There is great power in the ability to share one's experience with others.

BE COURTEOUS

No one likes to get a letter in the mail full of only complaints with no suggestions for improvement or change. If you have an idea you want to share, say it in a non-accusatory way and invite your legislator to consider an alternate viewpoint or take a different course of action. Part of building a relationship with your legislator is to include in your letter a statement of appreciation for their time and consideration of the matter at hand. As an added note, a follow-up letter of thanks after legislation is defeated/passed is always appreciated by legislators and their staff.

DON'T PACK THE ENVELOPE

Sometimes there are certain studies or press releases we know of that relate to the issues talked about in a letter; however, do not include them in your envelope. The more paper you have packed in the envelope, the more likely it is that your letter will be pushed aside or discarded. Instead, offer in your letter that you would be willing to send additional information if they would like it. Remember, it's about keeping it simple.

TELL THE TRUTH

State only the facts. Do not try to guess at certain things where your knowledge is limited. If you stretch the truth in your letter, it loses credibility. To be taken seriously, always tell the truth and stick to reliable information. Remember, we are part of the truth squad.

SEND IT ON TIME

It's important that when you have an idea or suggestion for your legislator about a particular issue, tell them right away. The longer you wait to take action and use your skills as an advocate, the less likely it is that your letter will be effective. Be aware of current legislation and what is going on in the political sphere.

KEEP IT NEAT

When possible, type your letter instead of handwriting it. If you don't have access to a computer and printer, then be sure to write legibly. If you are concerned, you cannot write legibly, find someone else to help you write or type the letter. Be sure to use business style formatting (see the internet or library for a reminder on how to use this format). Always print two copies of the letter – one for your records and one to send to your legislator. Also, never print on stationary paper; just use plain white paper – it's much easier to read.

Send your legislature an Email

Today we have the ease and convenience of using the internet at our fingertips; this includes access to email. Legislators also have access to email, and constituents may choose to send their representative correspondence through the internet. If you decide to send an email, there are things to keep in mind similar to when writing a letter:

- ◆ Be sure to put your name and contact information in the email.
- ◆ Share personal stories or experiences the same as you would in a regular letter.
- ◆ Think about what your message is, be brief, and keep it simple. Remember to proofread your email.
- ◆ Do not send an email every day – eventually, you will be seen as “spam.”
- ◆ Send the email only to one legislator –CC: many legislators diminish the power of your email. If you wish to contact various legislators on an issue, send them each a separate email.
- ◆ Do not send attachments – you can offer to send additional information separately.
- ◆ Be kind – do not be argumentative or overly critical in your email.

➤ Find your #Ohio Rep:

Who Is My Rep: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/district-maps>

& email: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/house-directory>

TIPS FOR LOBBYING

You can have a voice in the policymaking process. Here are some tips for contacting your elected official.

Phone, Email, and Letter

Remember that the seriousness with which your communication is taken depends, in part, on the amount of time and effort it took:

- ◆ Personal letters are most effective. (A faxed letter is as good as a mailed one.)
- ◆ Phone calls are next and may be needed when action is urgent.
- ◆ Emails follow phone calls. (They're easy to Send and equally easy to delete.)
- ◆ Petitions and form letters bring up the rear.

Your **personal letter** can make a difference.

Use a standard business format for your letter; it looks serious and is easy to read.

1. Address the letter correctly - it shows that you know what you're doing.

- ◆ The Honorable _____ Ohio House of Representatives (or Ohio Senator)
Dear Senator ____: (or Dear Representative ____:)

2. Be **brief** - just one page. Say what you're writing about and what you want your elected official to do.

Talk about just **one subject**. Don't dilute the letter by hitting multiple issues.

1. If you're talking about a bill that has been introduced, include its **Bill Number** (HB 545), its short title (Establish conditions for sale of brine as a commodity)
2. Ask for a **specific action** (support, oppose, co-sponsor).
3. Give your **reasons** - one or a few brief, logical arguments.
4. Stress the **local** - explain how the bill is relevant to the area your legislator represents.
5. Make it **personal**. Use your own stationery, and point out any relevant experience you have with this issue or subject.
6. Type or handwrite, so long as it's **legible**.
7. **Follow up!** Watch what they do, and thank them if they do the right thing. If not, ask them to reconsider next time. (Never threaten - it only annoys them.)

The Personal Visit

Prepare in advance. Make yourself notes about the issue or problem that concerns you, the Bill number and title that deals with it (if there is one), and what action you want the legislator to take. Know the name and district of the legislator you're visiting, who s/he represents (counties, cities), where they live and what they do for a living, and the committees they're on that have any connection to your issue. Know whether this legislator represents you, and if not, what your connection is with him/her.

1. Treat this like a business meeting.

- ◆ Make an appointment
- ◆ Dress nicely.
- ◆ Arrive on time or a little early.
- ◆ Be friendly and businesslike - start by introducing yourself and your connection to this legislator (your senator/representative if that's the case).
- ◆ Keep it short, straightforward, and courteous
- ◆ Say who you're there to represent if you're there for more than yourself. If you're there for a group, note if it has a chapter or members in that legislator's home district.
- ◆ Briefly explain what you're there to discuss - limit it to one issue. Include in this brief explanation why you personally are interested in this issue.
- ◆ Ask directly for what you want - support or opposition to a Bill, a funding item, an amendment, or whatever.
- ◆ Provide a short written summary of your issue and how to get more information (with phone numbers, etc.).

2. Give the legislator a chance and time to respond.

- ◆ Listen - s/he will appreciate it, and it will give you valuable insight.
- ◆ Try to respond to any questions, but don't make up information when you're uncertain. Tell them you'll try to find out and will get back to them (and do!).
- ◆ Be calm and courteous, even if you disagree. Hostility won't help, and even if they're against you here, they may be approachable on other issues later.
- ◆ Thank them for their time (and any concrete commitments) when you leave.

3. Follow up.

- ◆ Take notes on what was said.
- ◆ Send a thank-you note for the meeting time. Make appreciative note of any positive commitments by the legislator.
- ◆ Be sure to get back to them with any promised information, or at least a report that you tried, but it wasn't available (if that is true).
- ◆ Let your group(s) you're working with know what you learned.

Editorial Board meeting toolkit

What is an editorial board meeting? Almost all major newspapers have an editorial board, which consists of a few people that write editorials for the newspaper. A meeting with the editorial board usually consists of 3-5 advocates and individuals from the community where they share information on an issue.

In our case, a meeting would usually consist of a mixture of local coalition partners, concerned parents, and health professionals. The meeting, generally with one of the editorial writers, has a goal of educating the newspaper about radioactive oil and gas waste brine.

What is the difference between an editorial, OP-ed, and letter to the Editor?

- ◆ *Op-eds* (short for “opposite the editorial”) is a great tool we’ve used as advocates. Op-ed pieces are submitted by local experts raising the profile of a specific issue. Many of you have worked on and successfully had op-eds run in your local newspapers. Some of the authors range from nurses, moms, advocacy organizations, and more. Most op-eds are placed when they are responding to news (a report release, new science, etc.), and there is a local hook.
- ◆ An **editorial** is when the newspaper takes a stand on a particular issue. So rather than a nurse asking her local Senator/Representative to support your issue, the newspaper itself would be asking the Senator.
- ◆ Having an editorial run before a crucial vote is a very influential organizing tactic. The editorial board meeting is the first step to make that happen.

A **letter to the Editor** is a short 150-word letter from the reader to the newspaper. These letters are usually in response to an article that ran in the paper or something the reader cares about. Letters are printed as part of the Opinion page and let the editors know that their readership cares about an issue. Many “LTEs” submitted to one paper can result in the paper printing an op-ed you submit later down the road.

Why are editorial board meetings useful? Editorial board meetings are instrumental because it is a way to get our issue in front of your local newspaper. If you are hosting a letter to the editor campaign, or have an op-ed from a local spokesperson, the newspaper is more likely to print those pieces since they will know more about our issue.

Just as letters to the Editor show the newspaper that the readership cares about toxic chemicals and health, so does the in-person meeting. This allows for relationships to be built with the editorial writers as well.

How do I plan an editorial board meeting in my community?

- 1- Decide which newspaper to target
- 2- Decide who would be the best spokespeople
- 3- Think of who your audience is (a conservative editorial board or a more liberal one? Will they listen to health professionals & academics, parents, community, or environmental groups?) Meetings can consist of a cross-section of these constituencies as well.
 - ◆ Contact those local partners and ask if they are willing to participate in the meeting. Once you have buy-in from those partners, you can send in a request to meet with the board.
- 4- Request a meeting with the editorial board
 - ◆ The best way to secure a meeting is to send a letter requesting the meeting, outline which partners would attend the meeting, and a little background on the issue you’d be discussing.
 - ◆ It is best to do the meeting before an event, report release, or legislative vote. This gives you a hook to set up the meeting. Most issues must have a local angle to increase the chances of getting a meeting.

- 5- Follow up with the editorial writer to schedule a meeting by phone or email.
- 6- When the meeting is scheduled, plan a phone call with meeting participants.
 - ◆ This is an important step, so everyone feels comfortable with their role in the meeting. I suggest having one person on this call to answer questions that people may have and to bring everyone up to speed on the main “ask” of the meeting.
 - ◆ It is a good idea to have one moderator of the group who will open up with introductions (make sure everyone introduces themselves and who they work for), facilitates questions, etc.
- 7- Pre-meet before the meeting to re-establish who is saying what

Things to consider while in the meeting

- 1- Editorial board writers are sharp and quick on their feet. Make sure you are prepared to be engaged in a dialogue with them and answer questions.
- 2- Never answer questions if you are unsure of the correct answer. Let them know you’ll follow up with any answers you don’t have.
- 3- Make sure you allow time for the writer to ask the group questions. They usually jump right in and ask questions, but it is good to be mindful not to talk for too long. Whether it is a lobby visit or an editorial board meeting, people get nervous and tend to talk too much. Try to be mindful of that dynamic.
- 4- Stress the urgency of timing. The Bill will be voted on before the end of the year, now is a great time to run an editorial. You can tell them you’ll contact them once the vote is scheduled.
- 5- Use your materials as an outline for localizing your points.
- 6- Ask the writer questions to engage in dialogue: Are there concerns you have about the issue? What would be a local angle on this you’d be interested in (water quality, children’s health, etc.)?
- 7- Let them know about the upcoming event on which they can write an editorial. If you are releasing a report, expecting a vote, holding an event, etc., let them know that is coming and that you will follow up before it takes place.
- 8- Contact them before the event so they can decide if they will write an editorial
- 9- Send them follow up materials as necessary, continuing the relationship

Sample Agenda

Goal: present the Editor a convincing case that results in a positive editorial, urging support

I. Intro to meeting participants and coalition (health, enviro, business, faith, civic groups, etc.)

- ◆ We’re united to
- ◆ Shared goal:

II. Define problem:

- ◆ Real-world impacts:
- ◆ Pollution in people:

III. Movement for Change:

IV. Solution —:

Developing a Message & Materials

By Center for Health, Environment, and Justice

Key Words to Convey Values

Activate	Compassion	Equality	Hurt	People	Risk
Advocate	Confirm	Fairness	Imperil	Power	Safeguard
Affirm	Damage	Faith	Injure	Preserve	Strengthen
American	Defend	Family	Integrity	Pride	Support
Assist	Degrade	Fighting	Jeopardize	Principle	Sustain
Balance	Democracy	Forward	Justice	Progress	Threaten
Bedrock	Destroy	Harm	Legacy	Promote	Tolerance
Benefit	Dignity	Health	Mobilize	Protect	Tradition
Bold	Diversity	Help	Nation	Public	Trust
Champion	Endanger	Heritage	Neighborhood	Relief	Unity
Change	Energize	Honor	Nourish	Respect	Value
Community	Engage	Hope	Nurture	Responsible	Working

Remember to condense your issue to 3 key messages.

1. The Problem

What is the problem you are working to address?

Forget all of the detailed information you have gathered. Look at the big picture. Create a message that *frames* the problem clearly and broadly. Whoever frames the problem controls the terms of the debate. Communicate the scope of the problem and dramatize its impact.

2. The Solution

While defining the problem is crucial, if you just stop there, you will be in danger of sounding like a whiner. You need to present a solution. This is the "values" message. In what kind of society do you want to live? How do you want people to be treated? Make sure to provide hope.

3. The Call to Action

What do we need to do? This is the call-to-action message.

The action call may be different depending on your targeted audience. What you ask the governor to do in a leaflet may differ from what you ask radio ad listeners to do.

Practice delivering Messages parts 1, 2, and 3.

They must move together: "The problem is X, but the solution is Y. That is why we are calling on the state to pass Z."

Principles of Developing Your Message & Materials

1. Compelling

Tell your story in a way that excites and engages people. Talk about the problem, the solution, and the action. The most compelling stories have a hero, a villain, and a victim.

2. Concise

While you might be fully engaged in this campaign, others in your community have limited time and interest and cannot always listen to a ten-minute spiel with all of the details. Make sure your message is simple, jargon-free, and passes this test: if you told your story to your brother-in-law, he would easily understand it and be interested. You should be able to tell your story in 15-30 seconds.

3. Consistent

When advertisers sell their product, they know that people need to hear or see their message nine times before it sinks in. Saying it once is not enough. Instead, you must say the same thing so that people hear it or see it **nine times**. In addition, every person in the group needs to be saying the same thing.

4. Control the Message (PIVOT)

Stay within the basic framework of your concise and compelling message. Frame the debate and control the message. When asked a question on a subject that is not part of your key message, such as job loss or economic impacts, always answer the question within the framework of your main message.

MEDIA EVENTS

Media Events

Principles of Media Events:

1. We Make the News

Many people believe that journalists are constantly doing in-depth exposés and undercover stories based solely on their own sleuthing. In reality, most reporters simply cover the stories that come across their desks. If we create an event, plan well, and make sure reporters know about it, we are likely to make the news.

2. Develop Relationships with Reporters

It's important to remember that reporters are people. Take the time to get to know them. It is essential that they trust you as a good source of information. Never lie or exaggerate. Appear more reasonable than your opponent, deliver what you promise, and call them back immediately. Be friendly yet persistent. Remember that they are very busy people.

3. Keep It Simple and Repeat Yourself

Do not try to explain everything. Boil your issue into a sound bite. Repeat your message over and over again. Remember that everything you say to the press, no matter what the circumstances, is for the record. The simpler the message and the more times you repeat it, the more likely they will get it straight.

4. Respond to Questions with Your Key Message

No matter what question a reporter asks you, always respond by bringing it back to your key message. Do not simply answer the question. Always find a way to wrap the conversation or question back to your main point and never say "no comment." Use phrases like, "The real question is. . ."

5. Make It Newsworthy

Create hooks to make your event newsworthy. Reporters cover stories with conflict, visuals, a new angle, or a personal viewpoint to the story.

6. Go Beyond Your Event

Don't just get your event on the evening news. Continue to reach your audience and take advantage of the press attention by holding an editorial meeting, printing letters to the Editor, and building relationships with reporters long before and after your news event.

Seven Steps to Planning a Media Event:

1. Review campaign goals and set media event goals.
2. Determine how to make your event newsworthy. What's the hook?
3. Determine the target audience.
4. Craft your message, sound bite, and quote. Find visuals that compliment your message.
5. Outline the event details- who, what, where, when, why?
6. Research media outlets.
7. Craft a timeline.

Sample Media Event Planning Timeline:

Two Weeks Ahead

- ◆ Decide if the event is newsworthy.
- ◆ Choose the message and plan the event details.
- ◆ Schedule editorial board meetings.

One Week Ahead

- ◆ Prepare visuals.
- ◆ Get quotes from speakers.
- ◆ Write the news advisory and the news release.

Four Days Ahead

- ◆ Fax advisory. Send the embargoed release to weekly papers if the event is after their deadline.

Three Days Ahead

- ◆ Go through the presentation with speakers.
- ◆ Role-play the event, including questions from reporters.

Two Days Ahead

- ◆ Fax news advisory again and call reporters to “pitch” the story.
- ◆ Write your radio feed—your sound bite recorded by radio stations over the phone, done in conjunction with sending them your release.

One Day Ahead

- ◆ Fax news advisory and call reporters again.
- ◆ Reconfirm speakers.
- ◆ Make media packets (release, fact sheet, other relevant information).

Day of Event

- ◆ Arrive 30 minutes before to set up.
- ◆ Have someone greet media with packets and a sign-in sheet.
- ◆ Deliver (or fax) news release to reporters who did not attend.
- ◆ Call reporters who did not attend.
- ◆ Do radio feeds (call stations and have them record your “sound bite”).

Day After Event

- ◆ Thank speakers.
- ◆ Clip articles from newspapers.
- ◆ Send or fax letters to the Editor about your issue to newspapers.

Media Event Tactics

Here is a list of some advocacy tactics for media events. A tactic is an action taken to advance a campaign toward an end goal. A tactic's appropriateness relies heavily on the context of the campaign plan. Good tactics are focused on the decision-maker and build momentum for your campaign. Below is some **Messaging and Visibility Activities**.

Accountability Session: Hold an accountability meeting with a decision-maker. Invite them (and the media) to a meeting where your group makes a presentation and asks them to take action on your issue. If they refuse to come, think "chicken."

Anniversaries: Celebrate or commemorate an anniversary

Bird-dogging: "Bird-dog" a decision-maker at a series of public forums and events by consistently asking questions on when they will take action on your issue.

Call-in Day: Ask readers/listeners to call or fax a specific decision-maker with a specific message.

Call-in Results: If significant, announce results of call-in/fax-in day.

Canvassing: Announce an educational door-to-door canvassing or petition drive.

Choir/Caroling: Hold Holiday Choir or Caroling with songs on your issue.

Delivery: Deliver waste or unwanted items to decision-makers symbolizing your issue.

Email Action: Ask readers/listeners to email a specific message to a specific decision-maker.

Email Results: If significant, announce the results of an email campaign.

Endorsements: Release endorsement by celebrity, policymakers, or coalition of groups

The event at Decision-maker Office: Hold media event at decision-makers office or home calling for action or delivering the petition.

Films: Hold film forum with movies on your issue.

Gas Masks/Moon Suits: Hold an event at facility or site with gas masks or cleanup moon suits to highlight toxic pollution.

Guerrilla Stickers: Announce campaign to put stickers on polluting company's products at stores educating consumers about their irresponsible actions.

Hands/Ribbons Around Facility: Hold hands, ribbon, or string with letters or photos of victims, around government building or facility calling for action.

Honor Polluter with "Award:" Honor polluter or decision-maker with "award."

Large Scale Props: Feature large scale props (inflatables, paper maché figures, etc.)

Letters: Deliver stack of letters to decision-makers urging action on the issue.

Lobbying: Hold event during Lobby Day to discuss a policy you are supporting.

Petitions: Deliver petitions to decision-makers.

People's Public Hearing: Hold public hearing with a "judge" or panel of community leaders and request that decision-makers testify and answer questions. (again think chicken)

Poll: Announce results of resident door-to-door or phone poll on the issue

Postcards: Announce campaign or delivery of a bag of postcards to decision-makers.

Protest: Hold protest with signs, marching, and chants at facility or government bldg.

Rally/March: Hold rally and march at facility or government building with speakers.

Report: Release report on the issue.

Resolution: Announce introduction or passage of town, county, or state resolution.

Speaker: Hold public forum with speaker or panel of speakers

Street Theater: Hold creative street theater skit highlighting the issue.

(think talking outhouse. OHIO, the toxic toilet of the northeast)

Survey: Announce results of a questionnaire survey of political candidates.

Testing: Release air, soil, or water test results and call for action.

Toxic Tour: Hold a tour of toxic sites with a caravan of cars or buses for reporters and decision-makers.

Vigil: Hold vigil with signs or candles and call for action.