

LOCAL NEWS

STEBEN LEGISLATURE

Drilling opponents speak out on landfill use

By Mary Perham

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BATH — Gas drilling opponents weighed in Monday on Steuben County's decision two weeks ago to accept at its landfill drill cuttings from Marcellus Shale operations in Pennsylvania.

County Public Works officials maintain the cuttings will not contain any wastewater from the gas drilling process known as fracking. Radiation in the debris is well below safety standards set by the state Department of Environmental Conservation, according to the Public Works Department.

However, opponents have argued for months the county has not covered all

the angles it should before agreeing to accept the cuttings at the landfill.

On Monday, opponents told the county legislature that officials have not looked at the impact of cuttings left in a concentrated area, or the cumulative effect of radioactivity. They warned toxic fluids could leach into the soil and eventually contaminate the region's drinking water.

County Public Works Commissioner Vince Spagnoletti said the landfill has not yet brought in cuttings and does not expect to do so any time soon. Spagnoletti said drilling in Pennsylvania has slowed down since many companies have moved west and natural gas is being stored, not used.