



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
1800 Washington Boulevard • Baltimore MD 21230
410-537-3000 • 1-800-633-6101 • www.mde.maryland.gov

Martin O'Malley
Governor

Robert M. Summers, Ph.D.
Secretary

Anthony G. Brown
Lieutenant Governor

July 11, 2014

The Honorable Martin O'Malley
Governor
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401 - 1925

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.
President of Senate
H-107, State House
Annapolis, MD 21401 - 1991

The Honorable Michael Erin Busch
Speaker of House of Delegates
H-101, State House
Annapolis MD 21401 - 1991

Dear Governor O'Malley, President Miller and Speaker Busch:

Enclosed is our report on Part II of the Marcellus Shale Safe Drilling Initiative Study. Executive Order 01.01.2011.11 directed the Departments of the Environment and Natural Resources, in consultation with an Advisory Commission, to issue a report addressing, at a minimum, best practices for all aspects of gas exploration and production in the Marcellus shale in Maryland.

The purpose of Part II of the Initiative was to identify a suite of best practices for gas production in the Marcellus shale in Maryland. Best practices is a term defined in the Executive Order as "methods and techniques that have consistently shown results superior to those achieved by other means, and which are used as benchmarks." In investigating practices utilized in other gas-producing states and the new performance standards being adopted and proposed, we found that techniques and controls were evolving very rapidly. In some cases, practices that were obviously improvements had not been in place long enough to document whether they produced superior results. We have identified in this interim final report a collection of best practices that we believe will be as protective, or more protective, than those in place currently in other states. A risk assessment will now be completed to identify the level of risk that will remain if these best practices are followed. It is possible that the risk assessment, the health report, and other work underway may reveal the need for additional or different practices. If so, these will be identified in our third and final report.



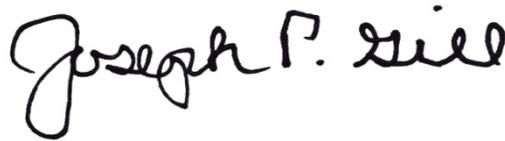
The third and final report required by the Executive Order will integrate what we have learned during the last three years about shale gas development. Under the Executive Order, this report is due by August 1, 2014, but it will be delayed somewhat. We expect to issue a draft report for public comment in the Fall and finalize it by the end of 2014.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact us at (410) 537-3084 (MDE) or (410) 260-8101 (DNR) or by email at robert.summers@maryland.gov or jgill@dnr.state.md.us. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Robert M. Summers, Ph.D.
Secretary, MDE



Joseph Gill
Secretary, DNR

Enclosure

cc: Sarah Albert, Legislative Library

