

SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
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SRBC'S REAL-TIME WATER QUALITY DATA AVAILABLE ONLINE
Water Managers and Public Can Track if Streams Are Impacted by Pollution

HARRISBURG, Pa. – The Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) today announced that real-time data from six initial remote water quality monitoring stations are now available on SRBC's web site at www.srbc.net/programs/remotenetwork.htm. A user-friendly map, graphs and charts are key features for viewing and understanding the data.

SRBC is deploying water quality monitoring stations in regions where natural gas drilling in the Marcellus shale is most active, as well as other locations where no drilling activities are planned so SRBC can collect control-data.

SRBC's remote water quality monitoring network continuously measures and reports water quality conditions of smaller rivers and streams in northern tier Pennsylvania and southern tier New York to track existing water quality conditions and any changes in them on an ongoing, real-time basis.

“The Commission is committed to applying good science to monitor water quality conditions in the Susquehanna basin,” said SRBC Executive Director Paul Swartz. “The use of advanced technology through these monitoring stations is making it possible for us to generate the data needed to determine whether or not water quality impacts are occurring from various activities, including natural gas drilling.”

Five of the initial monitoring stations are located in Pennsylvania on Meshoppen Creek near Kaiserville in Wyoming County, Sugar Creek near Troy and Tomjack Creek near Burlington in Bradford County, Hammond Creek near Millerton in Tioga County and Trout Run near Shawville in Clearfield County. The sixth station is located on Choconut Creek near Vestal Center in Broome County, New York.

Each monitoring station is equipped with water quality sensors and a transmitter to continuously report water temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, turbidity (water clarity), water depth and conductance (ability to conduct electricity). Elevated levels of conductance in water can be a leading indicator of impacts from natural gas activities if they occur.

SRBC receives the data collected by the network then makes it available to other resource agencies and the public through its web site. The monitoring network will provide early warnings to help environmental protection officials respond more rapidly and better pinpoint causes if water quality conditions change. It will also help local public water suppliers, local watershed groups and communities stay informed.

SRBC will continue installing additional stations in Pennsylvania and New York and making data available on the web site. Thirty (30) total stations are planned by summer 2010. More stations will follow this fall as a result of additional funding commitments SRBC has received.

The Harrisburg-based SRBC (www.srbc.net) was established under an interstate compact signed on December 24, 1970 by the federal government and New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland to manage the water resources of the 27,510-square-mile Susquehanna River Basin. The Susquehanna River starts in Cooperstown, N.Y., and flows 444 miles to Havre de Grace, Md., where the river meets the Chesapeake Bay.

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