



OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL
JOSH SHAPIRO

AG Shapiro Announces Plea, Public Water Line Construction for Victims of Cabot Oil & Gas

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SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY—Attorney General Josh Shapiro today announced that Coterra Energy Inc., formerly known as Cabot Oil and Gas, has pleaded no contest to charges related to environmental crimes in Northeastern Pennsylvania. As part of the plea Coterra will pay \$16.29 million for the construction of a new public water supply in Susquehanna County.

“Residents of Dimock have waited far too long for the clean water Pennsylvania’s Constitution is supposed to guarantee all of us,” **said Attorney General Josh Shapiro** at a press conference today in Susquehanna County. “Today, Coterra, the corporate successor of Cabot Oil and Gas, took full responsibility for the crimes Cabot committed that polluted resident’s water. Under this historic settlement, Coterra will now pay to build a new public water line that will provide clean, reliable drinking water for generations to come.”

The Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General charged Coterra Energy Inc. in 2020 after a Grand Jury investigation into the contamination of well water in Dimock, Susquehanna County. The investigation revealed that the company’s activities associated with drilling and producing unconventional gas wells were responsible for methane pollution in the local water supply. This contamination led to multiple Dimock residents suffering from impacts to their own personal water supplies, including the explosion of Norma Fiorentino’s drinking water well in January 2009.

During the investigation, the Grand Jury heard testimony from several residents who shared stories of their water becoming contaminated after allowing Coterra to drill wells on their property. In some cases the water was so contaminated it even caught fire. These residents and

their families were forced to stop drinking their water as it was impacted with metals and high levels of methane. In order to supply their homes with this necessity, residents had to travel miles to pick up drinking water.

When one resident contacted the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protections to ask when their water would be clean again, they were told that the water would be clean again in several years. A decade later, at the time of their appearance before the grand jury, the issue had remained unresolved.

Today, Coterra entered a plea to Prohibition Against Discharge of Industrial Wastes, a violation of the Clean Streams Law. As part of the plea agreement, Coterra will pay \$16.29 million toward a new regulated public water line as well as payment of 75 years of water bills for the impacted homeowners. This money will also be used to provide treatment systems to treat the homeowners' water supplies and the provision of bottled water while the public water line is under construction.

“This agreement brings justice to the residents of Dimock who for years had been ignored,” said AG Shapiro. “People across the country remember what happened here in Dimock, and now, they will know the rule of law won the day. Companies will take notice that we won’t allow communities like this to be taken advantage of or forgotten.”

The agreement is the result of years of thorough investigation and evaluation by independent experts to sample and analyze the water contamination and develop an engineering plan that would best serve the needs of the residents of Dimock. The construction and operation of the water line will be overseen by Pennsylvania American Water Company, a company with years of experience providing water to the Commonwealth, that is currently serving nearly 19% of Pennsylvanians. While it will take time to construct, this water line will ultimately provide the residents of Dimock with clean, safe drinking water when they turn on their tap. Access to this clean water is a right that has been elusive to these homeowners for more than a decade.

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