

May 24, 2001

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing to request your support and join us in the battle to protect our environment not only for ourselves but also for our children and grandchildren.

On April 26, 2001, the Carbon County Commissioners enacted Ordinance #2001-01 which prohibits any entity from chemical spraying within the County of Carbon. A copy of this ordinance is attached for your review. Please note Section 5 of the Ordinance specifically exempts agricultural operations.

As elected officials, one of our main duties is the health and welfare of our citizens. We feel very strongly that the effects of this chemical and/or herbicidal spray used to control vegetation growth is not fully known. The food chain starts with the natural resource, water, without water nothing will exist. Our future generations will feel the impact. We may not be here to see this impact but we do have the obligation to our citizens to prevent it.

Methods currently used also destroy the aesthetics of our County that relies heavily upon the tourism trade. When entering Carbon County tourists see a dirty brown landscape due to the chemicals and/or herbicides used by the local utilities and the Department of Transportation to control vegetation growth, instead of a lush, rich green landscape. We are sure that this is also the case in your County.

The Pennsylvania Constitution states:

Section 27. The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania public natural resources are the common property of all the people, including generations yet to come. As trustee of these resources, the commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the people.

The practices regulated by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, the activities of the Department of Transportation, Department of Environmental Protection, the local utilities and numerous others are a direct conflict with the Pennsylvania Constitution. It is time that a change is made to the Pennsylvania Pesticide Control Act of 1973 which is the crutch used by the Department of Agriculture to regulate this activity.

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Therefore, we strongly urge your support on this issue and hope that you will also step forward and enact similar restrictions in your County. This is a direct challenge to the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, but there is strength in numbers and it is time that we are heard, not only for ourselves but also for our future.

Thank you for your anticipated support and if you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

CARBON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Tom C. Gerhard, Vice-Chairman

Charles Getz, Commissioner

cc The Honorable Governor Ridge
Senator James Rhoades
Representative Keith McCall
Douglas E. Hill, CCAP Executive Director
Robert Uguccioni, Executive Director, Pocono Mountain Vacation Bureau

P.S. If you need to know anything about "safe herbicides" just ask any Vietnam Veteran