



BUCKEYE
ENVIRONMENTAL
NETWORK

STOP THE WHITE WASHING OF RADIOACTIVE OIL AND GAS WASTE BRINE



TOOLKIT

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BRINE FACTSHEET



Radioactive Liquid Waste from Oil & Gas Production



By: Buckeye Environmental Network tm

Ohio Department of Natural Resources tests confirms dangerously high levels of radium 226 & 228 in brine from oil and gas production wells. Brine is used on some Ohio roads as a deicer and dust suppressant, where it may get into the soil, can be tracked into homes, or become airborne as radioactive dust and can contaminate drinking water sources and agricultural products.

SOURCES for brines used on Ohio roads

Brines from conventional, low-volume oil and gas extraction wells can legally be *and are* used on many Ohio roads by some ODOT districts (covering at least 28 counties as of 2019) and by many counties and townships.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Oil and Gas Brine TEST RESULTS

Radioactive levels of **radium** 226 and 228 in brine from 151 oil & gas well samples.

Well Type	# Wells Sampled	Results*
Conventional (vertical, shallow) wells, the old mom & pop wells	118	66 to 9602 pCi/L**
Horizontal (deep) wells	25	173 to 3264 pCi/L
Out-of-state (brine disposed in OH)	8	54.6 to 9798 pCi/L
* Source: Tests completed for ODNR Radiation Safety Section, Division of Oil and Gas, cited in their memos of 1-23-18 and 7-2-18		
** Picocuries: a measure of the intensity of radioactivity; pCi/L reflects the intensity of radioactivity per liter of water.		

Legal Exposure Limits

Ohio Administrative Code sets the legal limit for combined Radium-226 and Radium-228 discharge to the environment to 120 pCi/L. (OAC 3701:1-38-12, Appendix C, Table II) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency drinking water standard for combined Radium 226 and 228 is 5pCi/L. (40 CFR 141.66)

Health-based exposure limits: from *Radioactive elements most commonly detected in drinking water* *Environmental Working Group Tap Water Database 2019* ewg.org/tapwater/reviewed-radiological.php

Element	Primary health concern	Detection level, in picocuries per liter	Health-based limits (based on one-in-a-million cancer risk)	National Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) in pCi/L	Cancer risk at legal limit
Radium-226 & -228	Bone cancer, other cancers	1	0.05 pCi/L	5 pCi/L for combined radium 226+228	7 cancer cases per 100,000 exposed

Health Effects and Dangers of Radium

U.S. EPA and the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Biological Effects of Ionizing Radiation list radium as a known human carcinogen. (ATSDR ToxFAQs) Human exposure results in an increased incidence of bone, liver, and breast cancer. Radium-226 is especially dangerous because, unlike many radioactive isotopes, it dissolves readily in water. When the contaminated water is ingested, the body mistakes Ra-226 for dissolved calcium and deposits it in bones. Radium-226 is thus called a bone seeker. Radium 226 and 228 are the parents of radon gas, a major cause of lung cancer.

USEPA has set a health guideline of zero for all radioactive elements in drinking water. However, federal legal limits for radiation and radioactive contaminants are based on the cost of removing contaminants and don't necessarily reflect exposure levels considered safe by public health and medical officials. Since detection limits (minimum level needed for detectability) of radioactive substances in water are higher than health-based guidelines, even residents of communities with "no detected radiation" may face cancer risks from radioactivity in drinking water.

We have been told over and over that brine spreading is safe because it is from waste produced by conventional wells rather than unconventional horizontal wells. As we suspected all along, this assumption is false; waste from conventional wells can be highly radioactive. Radium 226 has a half-life of 1,600 years, meaning that in 1,600 years half of the radium concentration will still be present. Thus for the highest concentration tested from an Ohio well (9,602 picocuries), the concentration will still be 4,801 picocuries 1,600 years from now.



House Bill 545 fact sheet



HB 545 will allow cancer-causing “brine” from vertically drilled oil and gas wells to be taken out from under the regulatory control of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (Ohio DNR). If the owners of AquaSalina by Nature’s Own make a one-time paperwork filing showing that this radioactive oil and gas waste has been approved for use elsewhere, they will meet the requirement that will allow them to be free of Ohio environmental regulation.

HB 545 removes and restricts Ohio DNR authority. ODNR will only be allowed to accept limited documentation that would supposedly demonstrate that the product is “not expected to result in damage or injury to public health and safety or the environment.” No proof will be necessary to document that AquaSalina is safe. No warning labels are required stating that the product contains radioactive isotopes, even when it is understood through recent testing, that they exceed safety limits for environmental discharge.

HB 545 will prohibit the chief from future rulemaking that would protect public health or the environment.

HB 545 will not only legalize others to sell radioactive oil and gas waste as a commodity; they also would give bulletproof protection to the drilling industry against liability.

HB 545 will also extend to ORC 1509.222 and 1509.223, which will remove crucial oversight of the transportation and application of the radioactive commodity. No longer would haulers of the radioactive commodity be required to file an annual report on the location, date, time, and amounts of “brine” transported and disposed of at each location.

HB 545 does not provide standards for testing of the product to prove its safety. No chemical disclosure or lab results are required.

HB 545 limits the number of tests the chief can request on a particular product to four tests annually.

ODNR testing results of conventional brine for radioactivity as quoted in the ODNR report

...Advise Nature’s Own Source/AquaSalina that the average radioactivity in AquaSalina **exceeds** the 40 CFR 141.66 Drinking Water limits for combined Ra-226 and Ra-228 by a factor of 300, thus human consumption of any amount of AquaSalina is highly discouraged. (ODNR Interoffice Memo 7/26/17)

Advise Nature’s Own Source/AquaSalina that the radioactivity in AquaSalina exceeds State of Ohio discharge to the environment limits for Ra-226 and Ra-228 as delineated in Ohio Administrative Code 3701:1-38-12, Appendix C, Table II, Effluent Concentrations. (ODNR Interoffice Memo 7/26/17)...

Combined radium Ra226/Ra228 concentration in the Nature’s Own Source/AquaSalina container purchased from Hartville Hardware was the highest identified in this study at 2,491 pCi/l. (ODNR Interoffice Memo 7/26/17)
The USEPA National Primary Drinking Water Regulation, 40 CFR 141.66 limits combined Ra226 and Ra-228 in drinking water to 5.0 pCi/l. All sample results (except the DOT tap water) exceed the regulation. (ODNR Interoffice Memo 7/26/17)

All sample results (except the DOT samples) exceed the state of Ohio discharge to the environment limits for Ra-226 and Ra-228 as delineated in Ohio Administrative Code 3701:2-38-12, Appendix C, Table II, Effluent Concentrations. (ODNR Interoffice Memo 7/26/17)

WARNING! We see House Bill 545 as an industry attempt to deregulate waste fluids from the oil and gas production industry. These wastes have proved to be radioactive at levels well above limits that have been deemed safe. If HB 545 were to pass the Ohio legislature, the public would never know where these radioactive waste fluids from vertical wells have been spread. It will not be that ODNR won’t tell us, they won’t know either! Currently, if a local government wants to spread the liquid waste from the oil and gas industries, they must pass a local resolution and provide that to ODNR, and document the amounts and source locations of the materials. Under HB 545 a local resolution will not be required if the fluids come from vertical wells, and your local elected officials may not even know it is being used.

Contact Buckeye Environmental Network for more information info@benohio.org

AQUASALINA

Aqua Salina is a product made by filtering brine from conventional wells and adding an anti-corrosive chemical. It has been sold to the general public as well as to the State of Ohio for use on our roads. For a third time, a legislative bill (HB 545) has been introduced, seeking to protect this product from future regulation.

All samples of AquaSalina tested by ODNR exceeded federal Drinking Water legal limits for combined Ra-226 and Ra-228, averaging 1,731 pCi/L, or *346 times* the EPA standard. The highest concentration found (from a container of AquaSalina purchased from a hardware store in Hartville, OH) was almost 500 times the standard. Ra-226 and Ra-228 radioactivity in all samples also exceeded State of Ohio limits for discharge to the environment (OAC 3701:1-38-12, App. C, Table II, Effluent Concentrations). The combined radium Ra226/Ra228 concentration in all samples of post-production AquaSalina, other than the Hartville Hardware sample, averaged within 10% of each other at 1,578.6 pCi/l. (ODNR Interoffice Memo 7/26/17; pdf at benohio.org issues page)

UPDATE ON AQUASALINA TESTING

In February and March of 2020 the Ohio Department of Natural Resources did split sampling of AquaSalina with Nature's Own Sources. Their conclusion was that the process did not *increase* the concentration of Radium 226 and 228. However, this conclusion is irrelevant — it has nothing to do with whether the levels found are *safe*. They clearly are not! See below for a short breakdown of the concentration.

Table 3 - Summary of DOGRM split-sample results from Table 1 (radiochemistry analysis).

Combined Ra226 & Ra228	Minimum pCi/l	Average pCi/l	Maximum pCi/l
Raw Brine (conventional wells)	1047	3715	9602
Finished Brine (AquaSalina)	901	2510	5628

Table 4 - Summary of DOGRM split-sample results from Table 2 (indirect gamma analysis).

Combined Ra226 & Ra228	Minimum pCi/l	Average pCi/l	Maximum pCi/l
Raw Brine (conventional wells)	1328	3987	9541
Finished Brine (AquaSalina)	1328	3251	7415

- Aquasalina is approved for road use in 224 townships/municipalities in Ohio.
- Ohio Department of Transportation also uses AquaSalina on state roads in 29 counties.

Additional Concerns about the Approval Process for Oil&Gas Brine-spreading

- Approvals authorize multiple applications per roadway and do not have an expiration date.
- The specific batch of oil or gas brine used does not have to be tested for radioactivity.
- Testing for naturally occurring radioactive materials is not required.
- There are no provisions for follow-up monitoring or enforcement of radioactivity in the environment.

Under federal and state Underground Injection Control (UIC) regulations, any waste containing radioactive concentrations exceeding those designated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (10 CFR 20 Appendix B, Table 2, Column 2) must be treated as radioactive and disposed of accordingly. For both radium-226 *and* radium-228 the threshold is 60 pCi/L for a combined threshold of 120 pCi/L. Only legal exemptions for oil and gas industry waste allow this radioactive waste to be both sold as a commodity and used indiscriminately on public roads with no assessment of environmental and public health impacts. Allowing the spreading of radioactive waste in the environment is a serious health issue that must be halted now! See HB 545 factsheet next page.

For more info, contact info@benohio.org. Useful background and links at rollingstone.com/politics/politics-features/oil-gas-fracking-radioactive-investigation-937389/ published 1-21-20

Sample FaceBook Post, Tweets, phone rap

Sample Facebook posts

Will you ask your State Rep to oppose HB 545 today? Urge #Ohio House to stop this Bill that makes #oilandgas waste a commodity: it allows anyone, anywhere to spread #radioactive oil & gas well brine products on roads, sidewalks, and even on steps, making it easy to be transported into people's homes.

☢Testing of #oilandgas brine by Ohio Department of Natural Resources reveals levels of radium 226 and 228 as high as 500 times background and 300 time the federal drinking water limits:

<https://benohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ODNR-lab-tests.pdf>

► Find your #Ohio Rep:

Who Is My Rep: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/district-maps>

& email: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/house-directory>

◆ HB 545 Summary:

To enact section 1509.228 of the Revised Code to establish conditions and requirements for the sale of brine from oil or gas operations as a commodity and to exempt that commodity from requirements otherwise applicable to brine.

<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-545>

#VoteNO #HB545 #fracking waste

Will you ask your State Representative to become an opponent today?

Sample Tweets

1) Will you ask your State Rep to oppose HB545 today? Urge #Ohio House to stop Bill that makes #oilandgas waste a commodity: allows anyone, anywhere to spread #radioactive oil&gas well brine products on roads, sidewalks.

<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-545>

#Fracking

<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/house-directory>

2) Testing of #oilandgas brine by @ohiodnr reveals levels of radium 226 and 228 as high as 500 times background and 300 time the federal drinking water limits:

<https://benohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ODNR-lab-tests.pdf>

#VoteNO #HB545 ► Find your #Ohio Rep's # & email here: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/district-maps>

#fracking waste

Sample phone rap for grassroots phone calls

General phone call

Sometimes when we don't have a lot of time, it is easiest to make a phone call to our legislator. Again, as with letter writing and emails, there are things to keep in mind:

Be sure to introduce yourself – provide your name and address so your legislator knows you are a constituent. If it turns out they are not available, feel free to speak with one of his or her staff members. They are capable of answering many of your questions and addressing concerns you may have.

Think about what you want to say – sometimes having a written list of talking points helps us remember the most important things. (This can also help if you're nervous.)

- ◆ If there is a particular piece of legislation you are referring to, name the Bill or statute. HB 545
- ◆ Do not ramble in your conversation – keep it short, simple, and to the point. State your reason for calling and what actions you would like to see the legislator take.
- ◆ Don't forget to ask your legislator their view on the position.
- ◆ If you feel talking about the issue further would be beneficial, make an appointment to meet with him or her in their office.
- ◆ Make an offer to provide additional information if your legislator is unsure about voting for/ against a particular issue.

Remember, phone calls are a great way to make a personal connection, share your views, and request a specific action by your legislator. Always be courteous and leave your contact number, so if someone from the office wants to speak with you further, they have a way to contact you.

Sample phone rap or email

"Hi, my name is _____ and I am a voter in Representative/Senator _____ district. I am calling to ask Representative/Senator _____ to oppose HB 545, the radioactive brine as a commodity bill. I am deeply concerned about the spreading of this highly radioactive waste in Ohio communities. HB 545 would allow anyone, anywhere to spread this substance for dust or ice control. This substance can be spread on roads, driveways, sidewalks, and even on steps, making it easy to be transported into people's homes. Testing done by ODNR reveals levels of radium 226 and 228 as high as 500 times background and 300 times the federal drinking water limits.

Please tell Representative/Senator _____ to oppose this legislation. We need him/her to be a strong **opponent** of HB 545 and stand to protect Ohioans' health and safety. The health and safety of our communities and our children are more important than one individual's profit.

If your Member of Legislature is opposed, thank them:

"Hi my name is _____ and I am a voter in Representative/Senator _____ district I am calling to thank Representative/Senator _____ for opposing HB 545. There is nothing more precious than the health of my family, and I do everything I can to protect them from radioactive products. Thank you."

Face-To-Face with your legislator

Meeting Face-to-Face with your legislator

If you plan on meeting with your legislator in person, it is imperative that your meeting is productive. In order to have the best discussion possible, you must come prepared and ready to answer questions that your legislator and his or her staff may have. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- ◆ Know your stuff! The more you know what you're talking about, the more prepared and less nervous you will feel. Look at your legislator's past vote on particular issues and know what the opposition is saying about the particular issue at hand.
- ◆ Respectfully express your views. Be kind!
- ◆ Be mindful of the fact that you have a limited amount of time to meet. Legislators are busy, so your meeting should not be much more than 30 minutes.
- ◆ Be sure to develop a strong relationship with the legislative staff as they are frequently the primary point of contact for the legislator.
- ◆ Leave behind informational fact sheets that summarize the points you are making in your conversation with the legislator for future review.
- ◆ Follow up with a "thank you" letter expressing your appreciation for the opportunity to meet with the legislator and his or her staff. Doing this shows regard for the fact that you know how busy they are.
- ◆ Be specific about what you would like the legislator to support – don't just ask for general support
- ◆ Be prepared to answer questions. If you are unsure, don't make up anything. Instead, tell your legislator that you will get back to him or her with more information.
- ◆ Leave behind informational fact sheets that summarize the points you are making in your conversation with the legislator for future review. Be sure these fact sheets are short, straightforward, and clear.
- ◆ Don't forget to give the legislator and staff your contact information for them to be in touch with you later.

DO NOT: Speak in an argumentative manner when in a meeting. Keep it professional. While you may or may not approve of certain aspects of your legislator's political party, do not make the meeting about "party politics." Remember why you are meeting – it's about the issue(s) at hand – not which party is better than the other!

PLEASE REMEMBER

Bear in mind that the legislative process is both slow and fast at the very same time. Sometimes action is needed right away to show opposition/support for a Bill while a vote may not actually happen until many months later. This can be frustrating at times when it seems like nothing is moving forward. It is always good to remember that even if you feel like your letters, phone calls, or emails are not making a significant impact, they are! There are often times many conversations that occur between representatives and their staff and other interest groups that you might not always be aware of, but remember that everyone has an important part to play in the policymaking process.

Sample text for letters to the editor/OP-eds:

OPENING

As a [mom/dad/grandparent, nurse, doctor, etc.], I am very concerned about radioactive products being spread in Ohio communities. I am upset by the enormous volume of radioactive brine being dumped in our communities. I am upset that we have no say in this bombardment since I know that these radioactive isotopes are known to cause cancer.

BODY

List some of your concerns here. You may want to use some of the bullet points included in the “Email to your members” (see below)

CLOSING

I was shocked to learn that under current law, this highly radioactive waste is not treated as such. You cannot simply regulate away the hazardousness, toxicity, and radioactivity of brine. I hope that Representative _____ does the right thing by opposing HB 545, the brine as a commodity bill.

I am urging Representative/Senator _____, to side with the health of his constituents by opposing the brine as a commodity Bill.

TIPS

-Use the points below to guide your opening and closing text.

-Submit your letter or op-ed column to one newspaper at a time. They like to have exclusive access to content and will be more likely to publish it. If your first choice passes, take it to another local outlet.

-Letters to the Editor should not be over 250 words, op-eds not more than 600* words. * Check particular length limits of your local media (some are more generous).*

-Express why you care (you are a mom, a dad, grandparent, health professional) and include a call to action, preferably a local one (asking a legislator to support the Bill or thanking them—include legislator’s contact information).

-Provide your name and full contact information, particularly making clear you reside where the outlet has subscribers. Most newspapers will contact writers before publishing. They will not publish your phone number or email.

How to find your legislators:

◆ Find your #Ohio Rep:

Who Is My Rep: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/district-maps>

& email: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/house-directory>

◆ HB 545 Summary:

To enact section 1509.228 of the Revised Code to establish conditions and requirements for the sale of brine from oil or gas operations as a commodity and to exempt that commodity from requirements otherwise applicable to brine.

<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-545>

Writing a Letter to Your Representative

You probably have written many letters before, whether to friends or family; however, writing to a legislative member is a bit different. There are important things to keep in mind while drafting your letter, such as length, format, etc. The more well-written your letter is, the more likely your message will be seen as powerful and lasting. Here are some suggestions to think about as you write your letter.

IDENTIFY WHO YOU ARE.

Let your representative know who it is that is sending them the letter. It's essential that you let him or her know that you are, in fact, a constituent from their region or district. Of course, organizations and agencies can write to representatives as well, but always remember to include your name, address, and telephone number, so he or she can get in contact with you.

ADDRESS LETTER APPROPRIATELY

Always address your letter to "The Honorable" (fill in the name). Depending on who you are writing, you will use a different salutation to begin your letter. For the Ohio legislature, use "Dear Representative *Last Name of Member+" if you're writing to a member of the House of Representatives, and "Dear Senator *Last Name of Member+" if you're writing to a member of the Senate.

KEEP IT SSS (SWEET, SHORT, SIMPLE)

No one likes to read a letter that is so long it loses focus and gets confusing. Letters should not go over two pages in length—one is even better. Your representative will be more likely to respond to letters that are written precisely and with a clear focus. It's useful sometimes to list out or bullet a couple of points you want to make in your letter – not only does it help your legislator follow the letter, but it helps keep you on track when writing. Short descriptions of just a couple of words in bold type at the beginning of a bullet point or paragraph can also help in making your ideas stand out. The more direct you can be in your letter, the better. The first paragraph should state your purpose for the letter, who you are, and what action you would like them to take. The middle of the letter should list the specific issues or concerns you have with just enough detail to make your point. The closing paragraph should once again state what you would like to see happen. If possible, include the numbers/names of specific legislation to which you are referring.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

It is a nice touch to include a personal story in your letter that relates to whatever issues on which you are speaking. While stating facts, it is helpful for you to make your facts come alive when they are attached to a story about yourself or someone you know, and is likely to make your letter more memorable. It is human nature to gravitate toward personal stories. Providing a personal touch to your letter will make it more memorable. There is great power in the ability to share one's experience with others.

BE COURTEOUS

No one likes to get a letter in the mail full of only complaints with no suggestions for improvement or change. If you have an idea you want to share, say it in a non-accusatory way and invite your legislator to consider an alternate viewpoint or take a different course of action. Part of building a relationship with your legislator is to include in your letter a statement of appreciation for their time and consideration of the matter at hand. As an added note, a follow-up letter of thanks after legislation is defeated/passed is always appreciated by legislators and their staff.

DON'T PACK THE ENVELOPE

Sometimes there are certain studies or press releases we know of that relate to the issues talked about in a letter; however, do not include them in your envelope. The more paper you have packed in the envelope, the more likely it is that your letter will be pushed aside or discarded. Instead, offer in your letter that you would be willing to send additional information if they would like it. Remember, it's about keeping it simple.

TELL THE TRUTH

State only the facts. Do not try to guess at certain things where your knowledge is limited. If you stretch the truth in your letter, it loses credibility. To be taken seriously, always tell the truth and stick to reliable information. Remember, we are part of the truth squad.

SEND IT ON TIME

It's important that when you have an idea or suggestion for your legislator about a particular issue, tell them right away. The longer you wait to take action and use your skills as an advocate, the less likely it is that your letter will be effective. Be aware of current legislation and what is going on in the political sphere.

KEEP IT NEAT

When possible, type your letter instead of handwriting it. If you don't have access to a computer and printer, then be sure to write legibly. If you are concerned, you cannot write legibly, find someone else to help you write or type the letter. Be sure to use business style formatting (see the internet or library for a reminder on how to use this format). Always print two copies of the letter – one for your records and one to send to your legislator. Also, never print on stationary paper; just use plain white paper – it's much easier to read.

Send your legislature an Email

Today we have the ease and convenience of using the internet at our fingertips; this includes access to email. Legislators also have access to email, and constituents may choose to send their representative correspondence through the internet. If you decide to send an email, there are things to keep in mind similar to when writing a letter:

- ◆ Be sure to put your name and contact information in the email.
- ◆ Share personal stories or experiences the same as you would in a regular letter.
- ◆ Think about what your message is, be brief, and keep it simple. Remember to proofread your email.
- ◆ Do not send an email every day – eventually, you will be seen as “spam.”
- ◆ Send the email only to one legislator –CC: many legislators diminish the power of your email. If you wish to contact various legislators on an issue, send them each a separate email.
- ◆ Do not send attachments – you can offer to send additional information separately.
- ◆ Be kind – do not be argumentative or overly critical in your email.
- Find your #Ohio Rep:
Who Is My Rep: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/district-maps>
& email: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/house-directory>

TIPS FOR LOBBYING

You can have a voice in the policymaking process. Here are some tips for contacting your elected official.

Phone, Email, and Letter

Remember that the seriousness with which your communication is taken depends, in part, on the amount of time and effort it took:

- ◆ Personal letters are most effective. (A faxed letter is as good as a mailed one.)
- ◆ Phone calls are next and may be needed when action is urgent.
- ◆ Emails follow phone calls. (They're easy to Send and equally easy to delete.)
- ◆ Petitions and form letters bring up the rear.

Your **personal letter** can make a difference.

Use a standard business format for your letter; it looks serious and is easy to read.

1. Address the letter correctly - it shows that you know what you're doing.

- ◆ The Honorable _____ Ohio House of Representatives (or Ohio Senator)

Dear Senator _____: (or Dear Representative _____:)

2. Be **brief** - just one page. Say what you're writing about and what you want your elected official to do.

Talk about just **one subject**. Don't dilute the letter by hitting multiple issues.

1. If you're talking about a bill that has been introduced, include its **Bill Number** (HB 545), its short title (Establish conditions for sale of brine as a commodity)
2. Ask for a **specific action** (support, oppose, co-sponsor).
3. Give your **reasons** - one or a few brief, logical arguments.
4. Stress the **local** - explain how the bill is relevant to the area your legislator represents.
5. Make it **personal**. Use your own stationery, and point out any relevant experience you have with this issue or subject.
6. Type or handwrite, so long as it's **legible**.
7. **Follow up!** Watch what they do, and thank them if they do the right thing. If not, ask them to reconsider next time. (Never threaten - it only annoys them.)

The Personal Visit

Prepare in advance. Make yourself notes about the issue or problem that concerns you, the Bill number and title that deals with it (if there is one), and what action you want the legislator to take. Know the name and district of the legislator you're visiting, who s/he represents (counties, cities), where they live and what they do for a living, and the committees they're on that have any connection to your issue. Know whether this legislator represents you, and if not, what your connection is with him/her.

1. Treat this like a business meeting.

- ◆ Make an appointment
- ◆ Dress nicely.
- ◆ Arrive on time or a little early.
- ◆ Be friendly and businesslike - start by introducing yourself and your connection to this legislator (your senator/representative if that's the case).
- ◆ Keep it short, straightforward, and courteous
- ◆ Say who you're there to represent if you're there for more than yourself. If you're there for a group, note if it has a chapter or members in that legislator's home district.
- ◆ Briefly explain what you're there to discuss - limit it to one issue. Include in this brief explanation why you personally are interested in this issue.
- ◆ Ask directly for what you want - support or opposition to a Bill, a funding item, an amendment, or whatever.
- ◆ Provide a short written summary of your issue and how to get more information (with phone numbers, etc.).

2. Give the legislator a chance and time to respond.

- ◆ Listen - s/he will appreciate it, and it will give you valuable insight.
- ◆ Try to respond to any questions, but don't make up information when you're uncertain. Tell them you'll try to find out and will get back to them (and do!).
- ◆ Be calm and courteous, even if you disagree. Hostility won't help, and even if they're against you here, they may be approachable on other issues later.
- ◆ Thank them for their time (and any concrete commitments) when you leave.

3. Follow up.

- ◆ Take notes on what was said.
- ◆ Send a thank-you note for the meeting time. Make appreciative note of any positive commitments by the legislator.
- ◆ Be sure to get back to them with any promised information, or at least a report that you tried, but it wasn't available (if that is true).
- ◆ Let your group(s) you're working with know what you learned.