

Environmental Justice Center at Chestnut Hill United Church

The Environmental Justice Center at Chestnut Hill United Church has recognized for decades that for many reasons, society must move away from the use of fossil fuels as quickly as possible. The science is settled on climate change: It's real, and it's already manifesting itself, even in this region. The damage done by extracting, transporting, and burning fossil fuels, including natural gas, does enormous damage to people and ecosystems, as well as contributing to climate change. In particular, air and water pollution caused by the direct and indirect impacts of our reliance of fossil fuels hurt disproportionately those at the edges of society least able to get out of harm's way: those living in poverty. Any expanded use of fossil fuels, such as opening the Delaware Watershed to new drilling, thus is environmentally unjust.

We should be moving as quickly as possible towards a clean energy economy, powered by solar, wind, and geothermal, as well as increased use of energy efficiency and energy conservation. We certainly should NOT be allowing any new fossil fuels infrastructure to be built. This includes prohibiting any new natural gas wells, pipeline, or infrastructure in the Delaware River Watershed, be it traditional or nontraditional (i.e., "fracking) technology.

The Environmental Justice Center at Chestnut Hill United Church thanks the Delaware River Basin Commission for maintaining the moratorium for these past years, and for the seriousness with which the commission is pursuing a permanent ban.

We support a full and permanent ban on hydraulic fracturing in the Delaware Watershed. Thank you for taking our comments.