



OFBF Self-Help Energy Programs

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For Immediate Release

Special Briefing Highlights Current Developments on Oil & Gas Exploration, Pipeline Construction Projects

Ashtabula County business and community leaders, as well as interested residents are invited to attend a special briefing on oil & gas exploration and related pipeline construction activities, sponsored by the Ashtabula County Farm Bureau in cooperation with Ashtabula County Extension and Ashtabula Soil & Water Conservation District. The briefing will be held at the Expo building (formerly known as the 4-H building) at the Ashtabula County fairgrounds on Wednesday, March 8, 2017 at 6:00 PM.

The program will be facilitated by Ohio Farm Bureau Federation (OFBF) Director for Energy, Utility and Local Government Issues, Dale Arnold. "Over the next several years Ohioans could see larger, horizontal drilling projects well outside the Marcellus and Utica shale development areas. New interstate, intrastate, collection and utility pipeline projects will impact communities throughout Ohio, too." Arnold said.

During the briefing Arnold will discuss drilling and related production activities in Ashtabula County, energy market trends, remediation standards, as well as regulatory agencies governing different types of energy development. Issues concerning eminent domain and farmland preservation will be explored, as well as what landowners should consider as they finalize lease and easement agreements.

"There are a variety of projects being developed in the community, all with their own regulatory and procedural structures," said Mandy Orahoad, organization director of the Ashtabula County Farm Bureau. "Many folks have questions. Community stakeholders want to know how each project developer will address soil and water conservation issues, land remediation standards, use of local roads and safety procedures."

If asked to sign complex agreements, releases and associated paperwork, landowners have the right to have their legal counsel examine all materials. "Community members are realizing that many aspects of an energy development project are not necessarily boilerplate; there are still a variety of individual landowner and community decisions to be made. Our input is important."

Arnold has been involved in energy and utility related issues since 1995. He represents farm and rural residential energy consumers on a variety of government working groups and public utility advisory boards concerning energy development. He has extensive experience working with county Farm Bureaus and local residents, helping communities evaluate construction projects concerning electric transmission line and pipeline infrastructure.

The Ohio Farm Bureau Federation is the state's largest general farm organization, encompassing 87 county Farm Bureau organizations and over 175,000 member families statewide. Ashtabula County Farm Bureau leaders are active on state and local action teams working on legislation, regulations and issues that impact agriculture and its relationship with rural, suburban and urban communities. Locally, over 1200 Ashtabula families belong to the Ashtabula County Farm Bureau.