WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §22-6A-3A

§22-6A-3a. Karst terrain; rulemaking.

(a) Because drilling horizontal wells in naturally occurring karst terrain may require precautions not necessary in other parts of the state, the secretary may require additional safeguards to protect this geological formation. When drilling horizontal wells in naturally occurring karst terrain, such additional safeguards may include changing proposed well locations to avoid damage to water resources, special casing programs, and additional or special review of drilling procedures.

(b) In order to carry out the purposes of this section, the secretary, in consultation with the state geologist, shall propose emergency and legislative rules in accordance with the provisions of chapter twenty-nine-a of this code to establish designated geographic regions of the state where the provisions of this section are applicable and to establish standards for drilling horizontal wells in naturally occurring karst terrain. For horizontal wells drilled into naturally occurring karst terrain in such designated geographic regions, the rules shall, at a minimum:

(1) Require operators to perform certain predrilling testing to identify the location of caves and other voids, faults and relevant features in the strata and the location of surface features prevalent in naturally occurring karst terrain such as sink holes; and

(2) Provide any other requirements deemed necessary by the secretary to protect the unique characteristics of naturally occurring karst terrain, which requirements may include baseline water testing within an established distance from a drilling site.

(c) Nothing in this section allows the department to prevent drilling in naturally occurring karst terrain.

WV Legislature