

[by Smita Bharti · 2,240 supporters](#)

[Ferguson Township Board of Supervisors: Deny Toll Brothers development plan](#)

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**Petition update**

## **Jason Grottini and David Yoxtheimer Advocate Wellhead Protections in Ferguson Township**



**Smita Bharti**  
State College, PA

Jan 24, 2016 — The Ferguson Township Board of Supervisors discussed a proposed stormwater management ordinance update at its January 18, 2015 meeting. The board did not take action on the ordinance, and will discuss it further at its February 1 meeting.

Jason Grottini, State College Borough Water Authority board member and chair of the SCBWA Source Water Protection Committee, and David Yoxtheimer, principle hydrogeologist with Aqualith Technologies and a Ferguson Township resident, both offered comments on the draft ordinance.

Grottini specifically advocated concurrent adoption of a wellhead protection overlay zoning ordinance.

There's an extremely interesting exchange between Ferguson Township Manager Mark Kunkle and Dave Yoxtheimer at the end of the transcription, about the very different hydrogeological characteristics of the Nittany Formation (where the Harter and Thomas wells are located) and the Gatesburg Formation in the Grays Woods area.

It's important because one "argument" put forward by pro-development supervisors, including Steve Miller, is that other communities build developments right on top of their water wells, without significantly increasing water quality risks.

More information here:

<https://steadystatecollege.wordpress.com/2016/01/24/jason-grottini-and-dave-yoxtheimer-advocate-wellhead-protection-in-ferguson-township/>

Key Pullout Quotes:

Pullout Quotes:

Jason Grottini – “The water authority believes that the wellhead protection overlay is the best legal and technical arrangement for implementing the required technical review standards. The recommended update to the township’s zoning ordinance should be done concurrently with the stormwater ordinance update.”

Dave Yoxtheimer – “So, again there’s this potential cumulative impact, and we don’t want to reach that tipping point, or find where that tipping point might occur. And I think we don’t have to look very far, when we see that Penn State’s currently building a \$60 million water treatment plant, whereas for many decades, they were able to drink their groundwater out of their wellfields without need for, really, any treatment at all. And so as we saw more and more development, along, in essence, North Atherton, we have more stormwater, more runoff, more turbidity in the groundwater as a result. And, largely, hence, the need for a very expensive water treatment plant. And so, on this side of the watershed I don’t think we want to see significant investment like that, necessary. The water authority does have a treatment plant, a filtration plant. And sure, at some point, that will need to be likely upgraded. But we don’t want to have to increase the level of treatment, and therefore the cost of treatment, when we could have prevented that in the long run.”

Dave Yoxtheimer – "It’s a little different out there [at the Grays Woods wells], because now you’re in the Gatesburg Formation. So the depth to groundwater is two to three hundred feet. You’ve got a very thick, permeable soil profile there that provides a lot more filtration than, say, the thinner soils here. So when you go down Whitehall Road, I mean, you can see bedrock outcropping. Sometimes you only have a very thin soil mantle and so disturbing that very thin soil really disrupts that filtration process, where you can dig down a hundred feet and still be in soil out in that [Gatesburg] part of the region. So there are differences, depending on where you’re at."

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