



Welcome to Urbina Island

While rest of media highlights great results of PA DEP in-stream water tests, NYT doubles-down on different narrative altogether – putting itself on an island of one

- **Current PA DEP secretary:** “We deal in facts based on sound science. Here are the facts: all samples were at or below background levels of radioactivity; and all samples showed levels below the federal drinking water standard for Radium 226 and 228.” (DEP press release, [Mar. 7, 2011](#))
- **Former PA DEP secretary:** “These [DEP] results also are another blow to credibility of the New York Times February 27th story that was deliberately false.” (John Hanger’s “Facts of the Day” blog, [Mar. 7, 2011](#))

Virtually every media outlet in PA goes with straight-up report on DEP water tests ...

“Radium tests of post-fracking water contradict New York Times allegation” (Harrisburg Patriot News, [3/7/11](#)) “DEP: Rivers, Streams Not Radioactive” (KDKA-TV, [3/7/11](#))

“DEP Finds No Radioactive Red Flags From Gas Drilling” (WGAL-TV, [3/7/11](#))

“Water tests show normal radioactive levels in rivers and streams” (Daily Item, [3/7/11](#))

“No dangerous radiation found in Pa. water” (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, [3/8/11](#))

“Pa.: No red flags over radioactivity in 7 rivers” (Associated Press, [3/7/11](#))

“State tests on river water find low amounts of radiation” (Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, [3/8/11](#))

“PA DEP says radioactivity in Marcellus streams

... But one paper, based in New York, takes a decidedly different tack

E.P.A. Steps Up Scrutiny of Pollution in Pennsylvania Rivers

By IAN URBINA
[New York Times](#)

March 7, 2011 “Although the state’s river monitor tests said the radioactivity in the water was at safe levels in November and December, public health experts called for broader and continual testing.”

“As long as we are going to allow oil and gas wastewater to enter these streams,” said Conrad Volz, director of the Center for Healthy Environments and Communities at the University of Pittsburgh, “there needs to be monitoring weekly at least for a whole host of contaminants, including radium, barium, strontium.”

“Mr. Volz said that he planned to release on Wednesday the results of water monitoring conducted by his team last December on wastewater discharged from a sewage treatment plant into the Blacklick River.

“He said that he plans to issue a warning on

is below normal" (Philadelphia Inquirer, [3/7/11](#))

"DEP: Radioactivity levels in area rivers OK"
(Washington Observer-Reporter, [3/8/11](#))

"DEP: Marcellus drilling hasn't affected Beaver River" (Beaver County Times, [3/7/11](#))

Wednesday to anyone who drinks water from wells that are near the sites he tested."

"Both the state and E.P.A. have failed to make these plants get proper permits for discharging oil and gas wastewater into our rivers,' said Myron Arnowitt, the Pennsylvania director for Clean Water Action, an advocacy group."