

PUBLICATION

Louisiana Town Files Second Suit to Block Oil and Gas Well

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The Town of Abita Springs filed a suit on December 1, 2014, seeking a declaratory judgment to block the drilling of an oil and gas well about 40 miles north of New Orleans into the Tuscaloosa Marine Shale. Earlier this year, Helis Oil & Gas Company, LLC requested and obtained a unitization order from the Louisiana Office of Conservation. In September 2014, Helis applied for a permit to drill, and the Office of Conservation held a public hearing in November but has not yet issued the permit. The new suit contends that the construction of a well pad and related structures, along with the well itself, will violate local zoning ordinances as the site has been zoned for residential use. Moreover, the suit contends that the drilling activities will cause detrimental impacts to the surrounding residential areas and a high school located near the proposed site. Finally, the town alleges that the well may pose a “risk of contamination” to an aquifer that serves as a source of drinking water for the town.

The town's suit follows a suit filed earlier this year by the St. Tammany Parish government that remains pending in a state district court in Baton Rouge. While the town's suit does not request any injunctive relief, it does seek declarations that the parish and town zoning laws control where drilling operations may occur and that the drilling project violates these parish and town zoning laws. For a copy of the Petition for Declaratory Judgment, click [here](#).