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HOW ONE COMPANY GOES ABOVE AND BEYOND TO BE ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE

By **Michael Sieber**

One perception about the companies working to develop natural resources like natural gas from shale is that they hold little regard for the environment. However, in a presentation given recently to the Harrison County Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours event held at the MarkWest headquarters in Cadiz - as far as MarkWest is concerned - environmental responsibility ranks with safety as company policy.

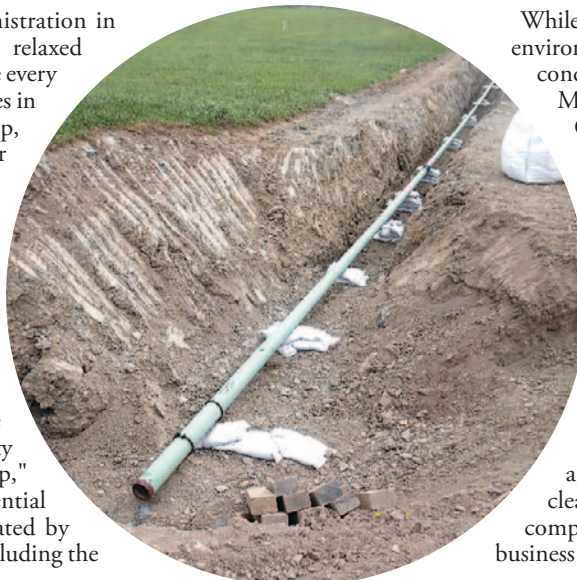
Stephen Ferrante, MarkWest Energy's Environmental Compliance Coordinator spoke to a full house about the attention the company gives to protecting the environment and why it's vital to the company's core philosophy. Ferrante comes from a background in erosion control, biological sciences and natural resource conservation.

"Our employees and contractors live in the areas in which we operate, and we all

share the same air, land and water. We intend to be a part of this region for a long time, helping to provide the fuels and petrochemicals that make modern life possible. As we do this important work, we are committed to being good stewards of the environment, not just for the community today, but for future generations. We want to be a company that area folks are proud to have as an employer," said Ferrante.

Ferrante went on to say that while each situation is different, when it comes to running pipeline through a landowner's property, the company first determines how a landowner is using the property in question, and makes every effort to maintain that usage whether it be farming land or land for hunting. Ferrante said they take all of that into consideration to ensure minimal disruption during construction, and to ensure that the land is returned to a state that's nearly identical to what it was prior to construction. "It is all a part of ensuring that we meet the landowner's needs. We also like to make sure that the landowner understands our needs for access to the right of way, so that we can ensure the safety and integrity of the pipeline," he said, and added "For the majority of the pipelines that we construct and operate, we must work to secure approval prior to crossing a landowner's property. We adhere to regulatory requirements for rights of way and we want to ensure that the landowner is comfortable with the reclamation. We try to meet their individual needs, while also adhering to the regulatory requirements."

With a new presidential administration in office, there's been talk of relaxed environmental regulations, and while every company has different internal policies in regards to environmental stewardship, officials at MarkWest say their company goes above and beyond what's required by law. "Simply stated, the safety of our workers, the safety of the communities where we operate, and stewardship of the environment are high priorities for us. We want our employees to go home safe after every shift, and we want to be good neighbors in the community, so we intend to continue promoting a high standard for safety and environmental stewardship," Ferrante said. He added, "Essential activities of our industry are regulated by various state and federal agencies, including the



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Ohio Department of Transportation, the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, and many more. We work with these government agencies on an ongoing basis as we obtain permits for various aspects of our activities."

While some people opposed to the use of fossil fuels paint the industry as being detrimental to the environment, Ferrante says that erosion is the number one polluter of waterways. "Commonly, erosion is a result of water, wind or other environmental factors and is a natural phenomenon. Sediment that is transported to waterways in increased amounts may affect the health of fish and overall biology of the stream or wetland." He added that MarkWest adheres to Ohio Stormwater Best Management Practices throughout the life of construction projects. These practices are designed to reduce the nonpoint pollution load in water systems and decrease the velocity of runoff after storm events. Ferrante says they use a number of erosion control devices and strategies, and these controls are monitored for functionality and remain in place until grass stabilization has achieved a minimum of 70 percent coverage.

To speed up this grass coverage, the company employs hydro-seeding, which provides a more uniform, even distribution of seed and gives greater spatial coverage of disturbed soil. This ensures greater erosion control.

While it's a delicate balance: maintaining the environment, keeping landowners happy and conducting business, Ferrante and MarkWest Energy's Vice President of Operations David Ledonne believe that doing things right the first time, and doing them safely, is a top priority. Ledonne says that it does the company no good to have to go back and re-do a job in which corners were cut in the first place. Both he and Ferrante added that they plan to operate in these communities for many years, and many of their workers live in the communities in which they work. Everyone wants to go home safely after a shift, and everyone wants to enjoy clean air and clean water. From the company's perspective, it makes good business sense to be a good neighbor.