

Mining operations and other facilities with wastewater operations can threaten the health of Missouri's people and their environment without proper protections in place.

Bill Content

HB 622 and HB 1207 seek to exempt “[a]ny earthen basin constructed to retain and settle earthen materials such as soil, silt, and rock,” from requiring construction permits and give the Clean Water Commission the authority to exempt facilities that “convey, contain, store or treat domestic, agricultural or industrial process wastewater” from several environmental health protections on a case-by-case basis. This threatens the health and safety of Missouri’s waters, both surface and ground waters.

Missouri's Water Resources

- 78% of total water consumption in Missouri comes from groundwater, 22% comes from surface water¹
- >80% of Missouri's public water systems use groundwater²
- Missouri has hundreds of thousands of private groundwater wells, frequently used by rural residents³
- Domestic, agricultural, and industrial wastewater all carry contaminants that can make water unsafe for consumption if not stored, handled, and treated appropriately



Earthen Basins at Mines Need Oversight

This bill could remove important oversight on certain mining activities. Mining facilities handle materials extracted from Earth’s subsurface that are more than “soil, silt, and rock.” For example, cobalt is a carcinogen and rare earth elements (REEs) are often found in Earth’s subsurface alongside radioactive materials and heavy metals. **Mines should not operate without proper design and government oversight in place to protect Missouri's people and their environment.**

Clean Water Commission case-by-case basis exemptions would seriously threaten human health and the environment

MDNR already has the power to grant variances to businesses on their permits. Allowing MDNR to exempt facilities entirely from regulatory requirements poses a threat to human health and the environment. We must ensure that facilities that hold such wastewaters have construction permits and abide by professional design standards. Please do not risk the health and safety of Missourians, now and in the future, for the sake of making it easier for certain industries to operate in our state.

(1) “Missouri Water Resources Plan, Update 2020: Executive Summary.” 2020. Missouri Department of Natural Resources. <https://dnr.mo.gov/document-search/missouri-water-resources-plan-update-2020-executive-summary>, p. 14.

(2) “Groundwater Levels | Missouri Department of Natural Resources.” n.d. Accessed March 2, 2023. <https://dnr.mo.gov/water/how-water/state-water/groundwater/groundwater-levels>.

(3) Ibid.

Protect Missouri's people and environment from ground and surface water contamination. Vote "no" on HB 622 and HB 1207 .