Anti-Fracking Advocates Send NY Water to PA

NEW YORK (AP) — Advocates trying to keep the natural-gas drilling industry out of New York state gathered Tuesday to send clean water to a northeastern Pennsylvania village where about a dozen households have been scrambling after a gas driller blamed for polluting the aquifer halted daily water deliveries.

Actor Mark Ruffalo and local elected officials spoke outside New York City Hall before sending the New York water to Dimock, Pa., where residents are deeply split over the drilling. They called on New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo to visit the village to see the effect drilling can have on water quality.

Residents there say drilling has made their water unfit to drink. Houston-based Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. says the well water is safe and won permission from state environmental regulators last month to stop paying for water for them.

The Environmental Protection Agency said last week that water sampling data provided by some residents failed to show contaminant levels that would trigger emergency government action, but officials there cautioned the agency isn't giving the town a clean bill of health.

Cuomo's administration is considering issuing permits for hydraulic fracturing, or fracking — a drilling technique that involves blasting chemical-laced water into the ground — in New York. Critics say it could poison the water supply, but the natural-gas industry says the technique has been used safely for decades.

The state Department of Environmental Conservation's extended comment period on proposed regulations ends Jan. 11, after which permits could be issued. Advocates say the drilling could bring jobs and economic growth to the state.

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