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07/08/2011

## Company Asking For Quick Hearing On Effort To Block Fracking Ban

MetroNews Talkline

Morgantown, Monongalia County

 [Attorney Jim Walls: MetroNews Talkline](#)



(READ THE MOTION FOR A PRELIMINARY HEARING [here](#).)

The Attorney for Northeast Natural Energy says the company wants to stay on schedule with its two drilling projects near Morgantown in Monongalia County.

On Thursday, Attorney Jim Walls with Spillman, Thomas, Battle made several court filings on behalf of Northeast Energy in Monongalia County Circuit Court in an effort to clear the way for those projects despite the new ban on fracking in and near Morgantown city limits.

"We've got to take the action to make sure that we can complete the process that the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection said that we could which was to horizontally drill and frack these wells," Walls said.

Walls has now asked for a hearing during the first part of August on the company's request for a preliminary injunction to block the ordinance.

"We asked the court to set the hearing for early August because it has always been our plan to conduct fracking operations in mid to late August once the horizontal drilling is complete," he said on Friday's MetroNews Talkline.

Another filing on Thursday is a request for a limited expedited discovery process so both sides will be ready for that August hearing. "This is an opportunity for us to put all of these rumors and innuendo to the test, to the evidentiary test," Walls said.

Hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, is a controversial natural gas drilling technique where high pressured water is used to crack rocks to access stores of natural gas in the Marcellus shale.

The ban on fracking took effect in Morgantown last month. Those who supported the ban say fracking poses dangers to the water supply.

Walls says they have a strong case and solid projects that have already been fully vetted and should be allowed to continue.

"I fully expect that we're going to be able to prove that this drilling operation, with the additional safeguards that we've agreed to adopt, is in, in fact, safe."

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