

EPA sets terms for wells at casino site - Columbus Dispatch

Written by Administrator
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Casino developers must drill eight observation wells and submit more data on soil and water contamination before the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency will decide whether they can go ahead with pump tests for drinking-water wells.

In a memo sent last week, EPA officials detailed the steps that Penn National Gaming must take to prove that wells would supply enough clean drinking water for

the casino planned near I-270 and W. Broad Street.

"Even if all recommendations are followed, there is no guarantee that the water supply well siting will be approvable," the memo says, because the agency can't predict what the tests will show.

Penn National officials are reviewing the memo, said Bob Tenenbaum, a spokesman for the company.

"They need to review what the EPA is requesting and determine whether that's practical or not," he said.

Penn National began seeking approval for the wells in October as it negotiated with Columbus over annexing the casino site to Columbus. Wells would take away one of the city's key bargaining chips - water service. Since then, Columbus officials have taken steps to make sure their other key bargaining chip - sewer service - is in place.

The city would lose out on an estimated \$8 million per year in taxes designated for the casino's host city if the land remains in Franklin Township. Columbus still would receive \$16 million in that case.

Penn National has listed more than \$10 million in tax breaks, reduced sewer and water rates, and other help it wants for the project.

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dcaruso@dispatch.com

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