THE DIRTY SIDE OF NATURAL GAS

Water Contamination

Water pollution can result from spills and blowouts during gas drilling, or from disposal of frac waste. Fracking a single well requires millions of gallons of water and an average of 40,000 gallons of added chemicals. A majority of these chemicals are suspected or confirmed to cause adverse health effects. Fluid flowing out of fractured shale contains these chemicals as well as naturally occurring heavy metals and radioactive materials. Hydrofracking fluid is exempt from crucial sections of the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Toxic Substances Control Act.

Air Quality Concerns

Ground-level ozone and noxious chemicals are emitted from gas wells, waste pits, pipeline compressors and condensate tanks. The combined emissions from numerous gas field sources present a serious health hazard, yet these aggregate emissions are not regulated by the federal Clean Air Act. In urban Fort Worth, Texas, gas drilling is a bigger ozone polluter than vehicular traffic. Fumes from compressors can cause asthma, stroke, cardiovascular disease and irritable bowel disorders.

Increases in Traffic

6,000 to 9,000 truck trips are required for each well pad. In other states, and chemical tanker and drilling waste spills have occurred as truck drivers travel rural roads at high speeds, and residents suffer from the increase in traffic congestion.

Industrialization

Full development of U.S. shale gas regions would require hundreds of thousands of gas wells and an extensive network of roads pads, pipelines and compressor stations, resulting in the industrialization of farmland, forests, and residential areas and subsequent fragmentation of wildlife habitat. Industrial scale runoff further damages water quality. What the industry calls annoyances - noise, light and dust pollution - can also have negative impacts on human health and wildlife.

Contribution to Climate Change

Greenhouse gas emissions from fracking discredit its value as a clean fuel. Methane, the principle component of natural gas, is a more potent greenhouse gas than CO₂. 3-5% of the extracted methane escapes from pipelines and compressors as fugitive emissions during transport and distribution. Unmeasured amounts are released locally from new or expanded fissures in the earth.
WHAT THE GAS COMPANIES DON’T WANT YOU TO KNOW

Gas Drilling Is A Boom-Bust Industry

Profits are short-lived, with little money staying in the community. Large landowners who have financially benefited are likely to leave town. While some reap financial benefits, the entire community must pay for damages and to clean up a degraded environment.

Natural Gas Is A Non-Renewable Fossil Fuel

Natural gas production forces government's focus away from a comprehensive energy policy and diverts investment funds away from developing renewable energy sources.

Gas Drilling Is Not About Energy Independence

Foreign companies already own local leases and significant portions of US drilling companies, and US gas is being sold on the international market.

Exemptions, Deregulation, Government Cutbacks

and lack of accountability have undermined the ability of state and national agencies to provide adequate protection against the environmental, economic, and social abuses of natural gas development.

GET INVOLVED!

Tell your local, state, and national legislators what you think. Ask them to close the gas drilling loopholes.

http://sierraclub.org/frac

Talk to your neighbors and friends. Tell them what’s involved. Share this brochure.

See the movie Gasland and hold a House Party for your friends and neighbors

http://sierraclub.org/gasland

Stay informed and connect with others across the country on the Sierra Club activist network.

http://sc.org/frac

IT’S NOT JUST A RURAL LANDOWNER ISSUE

Cornell students protest gas drilling.
Photo: Jason Koski, Cornell Chronicle

You Received This Handout From:

Drilling rig in a TX residential area   Photo: www.durangotexas.com/eyesontexas/fortworth/barnettshale