

THE FRACKING TRUTH

The more you learn about fracking the more terrifying it becomes. Hydraulic fracturing, better known as *fracking*, is the current extreme form of oil and gas extraction. The fossil fuel industry's mantra of "Fracking is safe and has never contaminated groundwater," is a myth they continue to trumpet.

There were 178 permits to drill new wells issued in August 2011 for 10 counties including Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Sutter and Tehama. A total of 32 states have been fracked and have had thousands of violations and fines issued by state regulatory agencies for well water and surface water contamination, air pollution, and soil contamination. The state of Pennsylvania alone has data showing that the top 4 violator drilling companies drilled 3,907 wells and had 1,146 violations (30% violation rate) totaling \$11,490,565 in fines--a very dismal safety record.

CONTAMINATIONS

The EPA and USGS have done separate studies, and have found toxic carcinogenic chemicals used in fracking have contaminated the town of Pavillion, Wyoming's drinking water. In Kern County, CA, farmer Fred Starrh won an \$8.56 million lawsuit in 2009 against Aera Energy (ExxonMobil & Shell) for contaminating his groundwater with 600 million barrels of frack wastewater. A January 2013 report by the Canadian Government confirmed that Crew Energy inadvertently perforated the well casing in the groundwater zone of a well. Crew Energy proceeded to frack the well, causing groundwater contamination that continues to migrate throughout the aquifer a year after the incident.

The severity of water contamination involving fracking is disclosed in industry published studies. A worst-case scenario involving a single well with frack fluid containing benzene could **contaminate 100 billion gallons of aquifer drinking water**. This amount of water is more than 10 times as much water as the whole state of New York uses in a single day.

THE RISKY BUSINESS OF FRACKING

The risk industries of insurance and banking are saying no to fracking. Rabobank, the world's largest agricultural bank, no longer sells mortgages to farmers with gas leases. Nationwide Mutual Insurance, the 7th largest company, announced it would not cover damages related to fracking.

The oil industry's own research reveals that an average of 6% of new well casings leak; the Deepwater Horizon catastrophe is the classic example. The same report states after 30 years an average of 50% of well casings leak. No wonder insurance companies and banks are backing away from fracking operations!

Environmental groups have been trying to pass state and federal legislation to regulate fracking. The oil and gas industry spends \$4 million per year lobbying Sacramento and an average of \$400,000 each day lobbying congress to prevent regulatory legislation, to weaken public health safeguards and to keep their annual \$4 billion tax subsidies.

TAKING ACTION

What do our neighbors, farmers, bankers, insurance agents, foreign governments and scientists know about fracking that the oil industry is trying to keep secret by settling complaints and lawsuits with non-disclosure clauses and claiming proprietary privilege to revealing the toxic persistent chemicals used in their fracking fluids. The inevitable contamination of our groundwater will destroy California's 81,500 farms and ranches and their \$43.5 billion in annual profits. Kern county farmers whose wells have been contaminated have united to form the Committee to Protect Farmland and Clean Water and to take on the oil industry.

We must follow New York State's 160 local communities which have banned fracking at the local level and are gaining strength at the state level. We have democracy to empower us, but we must all act on our intentions to protect our water, air, soil and revered communities. Without fresh clean drinking water, there is no life. This is a fight we must all join to win. The more you learn about fracking, the more terrifying it becomes. Please sign the online petition to BAN FRACKING at:

<https://secure3.convio.net/fww/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=193>

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