

Facts about Fracking

Our home and way of life are under threat. Oil and gas companies are currently working to lease mineral rights across our region for a never before seen wave of industrial shale gas development by tapping into a shale layer about two miles deep, called the Rogersville Shale, which until recently was considered inaccessible.

Through a technology known as hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," oil and gas companies anticipate a huge payout for them while we suffer the consequences. The results of the fracking boom in places like Pennsylvania and West Virginia have been so devastating that the state of New York recently banned fracking to protect the health and livelihoods of its citizens from the disregard and deep pockets of the gas industry. **There is no rush to sign a lease.** Don't be pressured or sweet-talked by the land men. Take the time to learn for yourself about the risks of fracking.

Things you should know:

- Fracking works by injecting millions of gallons of water, chemicals, and sand into wells where chemical explosions break apart the bedrock to release natural gas under extremely high pressure.¹ Fracking is not the same as conventional gas drilling or the nitrogen fracking that Kentuckians are familiar with.
- When industry representatives say that fracking uses mostly just water, they leave out the fact that the chemicals added to the water during the fracking process are extremely toxic at any level. Chemicals commonly used include benzene, xylene, and toluene, as well as other chemicals known to cause cancers, neurological problems, and other health issues.²
- Gas companies typically will not release information on the chemicals they use and store on site, putting community members and our first responders in great danger when increasingly frequent accidents like explosions, blow-outs, and leaks happen.^{3 4}
- People who live close to fracking wells have been found to experience higher levels of illness and birth defects.^{5 6}
- Landowners are often misled about royalties, and receive much less money than promised because of accounting tricks used by the gas industry.⁷ Most of the profits made from fracking will leave the community.
- Fracking produces large amounts of wastewater polluted with brine, toxic chemicals, hydrocarbons (oil and gas byproducts), and even radioactivity⁸ that has been known to pollute drinking water wells, streams, and land.⁹ Our water treatment facilities cannot handle this type of waste.
- Despite industry claims, fracking wells have been found to leak gas and chemicals, including benzene and formaldehyde, into groundwater and the air at levels far above those set by the federal government to protect human health.¹⁰ Well water can be ruined, and air polluted with high levels of smog.¹¹
- Living near fracking wells can drastically reduce the value of your property.¹²
- Industrial development from fracking has been associated with significant increases in crime, fatal traffic accidents, and rent costs.¹³
- While industry representatives may say that fracking is highly regulated, the truth is that fracking is exempt from many parts of the laws enacted to keep people safe, including the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and public right-to-know provisions of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act.¹⁴
- Fracking has been directly linked to earthquakes.¹⁵ The Kentucky River, Irvine Paint-Creek and Rockcastle River Fault zones are all nearby, as is the Bluegrass Army Depot, which houses deadly nerve gas.
- Leases being offered allow companies to place giant open-pit waste lagoons, multi-acre frack pads, hazardous chemical storage, and injections wells just 200 feet away from your home. The leases include arbitration clauses that mean you cannot sue the company if they destroy your home or fail to pay you royalties.

Times are hard, and promises of big payouts sound nice. But when you sign a lease, you are allowing the gas industry to bring these burdens to your neighbors, your family, and your community. Learn more. Talk to your neighbors. Help keep our part of Kentucky beautiful and safe.

Visit www.frackfreefoothills.net for more information.

Citations:

1. National Public Radio, March 12, 2013; 2. Environmental Integrity Project, October 2014; 3. Union of Concerned Scientists, July 2013; 4. The Columbus Dispatch, July 21, 2014; 5. Environmental Health Perspectives, September 2014; 6. Environmental Health Perspectives, April 2014; 7. ProPublica, August 12, 2013; 8. USA Today, October 2, 2013; 9. Public Radio International, November 18, 2014; 10. Physicians, Scientists, and Engineers for Healthy Energy, October 2012; 11. Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics, October 2014; 12. Forbes, April 10, 2014; 13. Multi-State Shale Research Collaborative, December 2014; 14. Oil and Gas Accountability Project, October 2007; 15. Bulletin of the Seismological Society of America, January 2015.