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WaterMan Blog

What The Frack? Hydraulic Fracturing, Energy, Water Pollution and Water Waste



Apr 27 | 23:04

Maryruth Belsey Priebe

Last Updated on Wed, 04 May 2011 16:18



The impacts of fossil fuel extraction on water resources may not be obvious, but they're there, and they're serious. The newest threat to clean water in America is the process of **Hydraulic Fracturing** - commonly called fracking.

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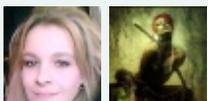
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H2O QUOTE

" There's something wrong with a mother who washes out a measuring cup with soap and water after she's only measured water in it. "

~Erma Bombeck

H2O ORG

The **fracking process**, which is being touted as an outstanding opportunity for achieving greater energy independence in the US, pollutes and diminishes water supplies in several ways:

- Drilling 5,000 feet or more underground to get at the natural gas reserves involves the infusion of drilling fluids which are not biodegradable which end up in groundwater systems.
- Millions of gallons of water (between one and eight million gallons per fracking episode; one well can undergo fracking 18 times), sand, and over 500 toxic chemicals are injected into natural gas wells to fracture the shale and enable natural gas to flow.
- "Produced water", the waste water from fracking that is infused with over 500 toxic chemicals, is either left to evaporate in pits until it is transported away, or sprayed into the sunlight where the chemicals evaporate into the air.
- The natural gas industry is exempt from adhering to regulations in the **Safe Drinking Water Act** and the **Clean Water Act** if it will maximize profits.

More than 1,000 cases of contaminated water have been identified near areas of natural gas drilling, with clusters of human communities plagued by health problems like cancer and miscarriages. Some communities can even light their tap water on fire.

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You can learn more about this water threat by viewing the **website** for the award winning documentary **Gasland** - which we highly recommend.

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