

# EPA Launches Hydraulic Fracturing Study

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Just several days after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a subpoena to Halliburton to force the company to share information about its hydraulic fracturing process, Halliburton announced the launch of a new Microsite that discloses the materials content of its hydraulic fracturing fluids. The company also unveiled a new “first-of-its-kind” fracture fluid system made from materials used in the food industry.

In March, the EPA launched a \$1.9-million research study into the potential impact of hydraulic fracturing — used in the extraction of natural gas — on water quality and public health. Although the process has been used by the petroleum industry for many years, it’s only been recently that more concerns about water contamination have been raised by the government, environmentalists and the public as the demand for natural gas has risen.

The disclosure shows that many of the chemicals used in fracturing are as benign as food additives such as Guar gum, which is a thickener used in ice cream and fruit jelly, but it also lists harmful ingredients, such as the petroleum distillate called naphtha, which is used in cleaners, car wax and paint thinner, reports The New York Times. It also lists several chemicals used in household cleansers and in agriculture as microbiocide agents.

Amy Mall of the Natural Resources Defense Council told the New York Times that “the public wants to know what chemicals are being used near drinking water sources. While it’s nice to see Halliburton acknowledging that desire, it’s not meaningful or sufficient unless this information is fully disclosed on a site-by-site basis.”

Mall also said in the article that it wasn’t clear whether the list at the Website included all chemicals being used or only some.

The Microsite provides the public with information related to the identity and common uses of the additives and materials generally used in the hydraulic fracturing process at its wells in Pennsylvania, according to Halliburton.

Although the initial disclosure pages are limited to Pennsylvania, where development of the Marcellus Shale is underway, Halliburton says it is committed to providing hydraulic fracturing fluid disclosure information for every U.S. state in which Halliburton’s fracture stimulation services are in use.

Halliburton’s new more environmentally-friendly fracture fluid system –CleanStim Formulation — is a key part of the company’s new CleanSuite line of products. Data about the new platform also is detailed at the new Microsite.

In addition to information about the CleanStim product, the Microsite also provides details on Halliburton’s CleanStream Service, which uses UV light instead of additives to control bacteria, and CleanWave System that treats wastewater at the well site, allowing it to be reused and recycled by the operator, which is said to significantly reduce the need for freshwater.