

Secret fracking chemicals contaminating drinking water might be revealed

Fracking chemicals disclosure bill awaits Texas governor signature

Deborah Dupre, Examiner.com, 6-11-11

Accused of human rights violation of contaminating the nation's drinking water with its secret carcinogenic chemicals, Big Energy might have to disclose its trade secret chemicals if a fracking state bill is signed. Aside from finally revealing its thus far trade secret chemicals, the new law could help lead the nation toward non-contaminated drinking water if Gov. Rick Perry signs HB 3328 now on his desk and other governors follow suit.

The signing of the Texas Bill would set in motion the state's regulatory body, the Railroad Commission writing rules that the oil and gas industry must follow in identifying the many chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing to unlock hydrocarbons in deep shale formations that is contaminating the nation's water according to a recent study.

Another bill, HB 3328, being pushed by the state's top oil and gas regulator, Commissioner Elizabeth Ames Jones, would allow the oil and gas industry to keep their "trade secret" chemicals, as it is doing across the nation. Jones calls this bill a "common sense" rule.

The Environmental Protection Agency does not regulate fracking yet the nation's water is being contaminated by the process say researchers.

Fracking requires massive quantities of water, a single well using 2-4 million gallons of water according to the Department of Energy.

"Although clean water is cheap and plentiful in America today, freshwater is not an unlimited resource," environmentalist Jamie Friedland has stated, later adding that "President Obama's position on oil has been one of the most disappointing and incoherent facets of his administration to date."

Friedland says another inconvenient truth is that domestic oil production is already up 11% under Obama.

"Scaling up fracking would consume billions of gallons of water. Even without using billions of gallons of clean water to get natural gas, 1/3 of all counties in the US are projected to face water shortages by midcentury and more than 400 of those counties face extremely high risk of water shortages.

Recent fracking studies indicate Americans drink methane tainted water

It is not only the carcinogens being pumped into the nation's gas-rich land that is contaminating American's drinking water. A recently released peer-reviewed study on fracking has worldwide implications in that it links natural gas drilling and hydraulic fracturing with drinking water contamination so severe, some faucets can be lit on fire.

A senior energy policy analyst with Environmental Defense Fund, the organization that helped Rep. Jim Keffer, R-Eastland write the Texas frack fluid disclosure bill accused the industry of semantic parsing, "a major

distraction.

"People end up shadowboxing instead of working on the real issues."

By releasing the new fracking study report in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences , the four Duke scientists have given hope to homeowners in the contentious debate with Big Energy over whether hydraulic fracturing, "fracking," is safe.

Abraham Lustgraten said that the Duke study findings is filling the information gap that made it difficult for lawmakers and the public to understand the risks of fracking.

"This is the most important evidence we've had that fracking is contaminating our drinking water," stated Tom-Scott Gordon, a resident of Arkansas where oil and gas companies are using the drilling process attributed to over 1100 earthquakes.

The Duke University scientists found flammable methane gas levels in drinking water wells increased to dangerous levels when those water supplies were close to natural gas wells.

"They found that the type of gas detected at high levels in the water was the same type of gas that energy companies were extracting from thousands of feet underground, strongly implying that the gas may be seeping underground through natural or manmade faults and fractures, or coming from cracks in the well structure itself." (ProPublica)

Duke is not the only major university investigating fracking chemicals. In May, Cornell University and Ithaca College scientists briefed congressional aides on the lack of research on health and environmental impacts of fracking that is releasing carcinogens according to former studies and attorneys battling the practice.

"Many of the chemicals used in fracking are carcinogens," said Sandra Steingraber, a biologist and scholar in residence at Ithaca College.

Compounding the hazards to human health caused by fracking, radioactive elements are extracted with oil and gas during the hydraulic fracturing process, as noted environmental attorney, Stuart Smith recognizes and is taking an aggressive stand against. (See: Prominent environment atty: Fracking radiation injuring Gulf Peoples, Dupré, D. Examiner)

Radiation threatening lives of Americans is not only due to Big Energy's Gulf oil and its Fukushima fallout, but also to Big Energy's fracking, as Crystal Stroud has learned in the worst way.

A national study report by the Environmental Protection Agency into the dangers of hydraulic fracturing is expected sometime next year.

Tens of thousands of Americans are so outraged about government in effect poisoning them, they are planning to occupy Washington D.C. in October and not leave until government agrees to their demands to end the human rights abuses.