

# **ATTENTION!**

## **Is Gas Drilling Occurring Near You? Here's what you need to know.**

In the next several years, several thousand wells will likely be drilled into the Marcellus shale formation here in Pennsylvania.

This drilling could be an economic boom, but it could also be a nightmare for our environment, particularly our streams, rivers and drinking water sources.

- Each Marcellus well uses up to several million gallons for hydraulic fracturing. Each well can be fractured several times.
- Wells produce a million or more gallons each of heavily polluted wastewater, often containing more salt than seawater. Few treatment plants are equipped to treat this water. By 2011, the state projects that gas wells will be generating 19 million gallons of wastewater per day.
- Well pads are up to 5 acres each, and roads and pipelines will be needed to serve the wells. The resulting stormwater runoff and erosion and sedimentation could heavily damage our streams.

Significant damage has already occurred as a result of drilling in the Marcellus shale.

- Several small streams in Western Pennsylvania were dewatered by drilling companies withdrawing water for fracturing.
- In 2008, the Monongahela River became too polluted, partially because of Marcellus shale wastewater, to serve as a water source for industrial users and drinking water consumers.
- Dunkard Creek in Greene County recently experienced a massive fish kill as a result of a bloom of golden algae. While the salty water conditions needed for the algae to survive are being blamed on mine discharges, it is likely the algae 'hitchhiked' to the region on drilling equipment.
- Residents in Dimock in northeast Pennsylvania have had their drinking water wells so contaminated by drilling that at least one well has exploded from natural gas migration.

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# So what can you do?

- Be aware of the possible negative impacts of drilling. Keep these in mind if you are considering negotiating a lease. If you decide to lease your land, consult an attorney to assist you in writing protections for your land and water supplies into the lease.

Contact Mountain Watershed Association for a list of attorneys working to assist landowners with leasing.

- Have your water sampled. The DEP requires drilling companies to sample water supplies within 1000' of the well head. If you are within 1000', you may consider also having your water sampled by an independent company at your expense. Ask the sampling company to send a representative to your home to conduct the testing.
- If you are not within 1000' of the well but drilling is occurring in your area, it may be beneficial to have your water tested as well. At least one family in our area has had their well water contaminated after drilling activity took place. Their residence is 1200' from the well head, outside the presumption area. DEP is still investigating the cause of this water contamination.

Contact Mountain Watershed Association for a list of companies providing water testing.

- Visit our website, [www.mtwatershed.com](http://www.mtwatershed.com). We have many resources available online to assist surface owners, including a landowner's toolkit and information on having your water sources sampled as well as a list of testing parameters.



Mountain Watershed Association  
working toward a fishable  
swimmable Indian Creek

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