

**Fracking Matters Newsletter 01-13 (91) – 7th January 2013**



Information letter for those to whom fracking matters and updates on the website FFI

**BAN FRACKING IN IRELAND!**

contact: [ineke@frackingfreeireland.org](mailto:ineke@frackingfreeireland.org)

visit: [www.frackingfreeireland.org](http://www.frackingfreeireland.org)

facebook: [NO FRACKING IRELAND](#)

[fracking ireland google groups](#), apply for membership: [charlie2williams@gmail.com](mailto:charlie2williams@gmail.com)

For an overview of all groups and contact details visit:

<http://frackingfreeireland.org/contact/contact-local-groups/>



**Wishing you all a Fracking Free 2013,  
full of clean energy to fight the frack  
and to keep our spirits high.**

**Ineke Scholte**

drawing by Benjamin van de Wetering

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## EVENTS and other small CAMPAIGN news

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FFAN have arranged for **Dr Eilish Cleary, Chief Medical Officer of Health in New Brunswick, Canada** to present a talk entitled 'Public Health Issues concerning Shale Gas Extraction & Fracking' at the Killyhevlin Hotel, Enniskillen on **Monday 28. Jan 2013** at 8.00pm.

Although all are welcome we are aiming specifically at Doctors & other Health Care Professional, NHS & HSE managers as well as politicians. I also attach my synopsis of her report. The full report is available at [www.gnb.ca](http://www.gnb.ca)

**Please spread the word to your local GP & Hospital Consultant and Managers.**

Thanks.

Carroll.- chair of Fermanagh Fracking Awareness Network

Brunswick report: [new-brunswick-health-officers-recommendations](#)

Synopsis: [synopsis-of-cmoh-new-brunswick-report-into-public-health1](#)

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**National Meeting 12<sup>th</sup> January 2013** – 2 representatives of groups/individuals. Time and venue ....(?)Drumkeeren??  
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Pictures received from Michael Cairns



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## ARTICLES IN MAGAZINES

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**Just to let you know that we have published the January 2013 (40th) issue of *Irish Environment* including:**

**News:** updated each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

**Commentary:** Aoife O'Grady, "Irish Presidency of the EU: Missing an Environmental Agenda"

**Report:** Sustaining Water Use in Northern Ireland

**Podcast:** Interview with Lorcan O'Toole of the Golden Eagle Trust on re-introduction of golden eagles in Donegal, as well as white-tailed eagles and red kites in Ireland

**iePEDIA:** Short-Lived Climate Pollutants

**YouTube:** A short film about SLCP (Short-Lived Climate Pollutants)

Please pass along this Notice about the magazine to colleagues, friends and others interested in protecting the environment.

: an online magazine covering environmental matters on the island of Ireland

[www.irishenvironment.com](http://www.irishenvironment.com)

Robert Emmet Hernan  
Blue Stacks Productions Inc.  
Publisher  
[publisher@irishenvironment.com](mailto:publisher@irishenvironment.com)

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**Article by Davide Gallazzi**, North West Environmental

Published: inshore ireland August/September 2012

**Fracking: Are short-term economic benefits far outweighed by long-term damage to the environment?**

<http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Inshore-Ireland-Vol8-nr-4-2012.pdf>

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## DO YOU BELIEVE? -NEWS

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**Shale Shock - How to Invest in Hydraulic Fracturing -**

[http://www.energyandcapital.com/aqx\\_p/30327/fracturing?gclid=CPSH\\_KLTxLQCFYRO4Qodoy0AWQ](http://www.energyandcapital.com/aqx_p/30327/fracturing?gclid=CPSH_KLTxLQCFYRO4Qodoy0AWQ)

**December 31st, 2012**

It is easily the most heated topic in the U.S. oil and gas industries today.

Even the mere mention of hydraulic fracturing would spark a long-lasting argument between friends.

So what's behind this inexhaustible controversy, and why has it been so denigrated by the media today?

At the heart of the matter are accusations of water contamination, unbearable pollution...

And billions of barrels of oil, too!

Here's the rub...

Without utilizing the advantages that hydraulic fracturing offers to stimulate the oil and gas resources, shale production across the United States would go cold, literally overnight.

*Hydraulic Fracturing is that essential to tapping North America's vast shale reserves.*

Not only are there very few alternatives available to these unconventional oil and gas companies, but the United States would be facing a serious energy crisis if the entire practice were banned.

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## WHAT YOU CAN/MUST DO

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**Ban fracking in Ireland – sign the petition**

**Submission to EU**

**Write to the PAD**

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**BAN FRACKING in Ireland**

**What can you do?**

**1. Sign the hard copy petition:(download)** <http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Petition-to-Ban-Hydraulic-Fracturing-for-Shale-Gas-in-Irel1.pdf>  
collect more signatures (if possible) and post it to the address at the bottom of the petition or post it to: Ineke Scholte, Masshill, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo



## 2. Sign the online petition:

**Republic of Ireland** - <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/ban-hydraulic-fracturing-for-natural-gas-in-ireland/sign.html>

**Northern Ireland** - <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/northern-ireland-no-fracking-required-here/sign.html>

3. **Sign the AVAAZ petition:** [http://www.avaaz.org/en/petition/Ban\\_Fracking\\_Ireland/?tta](http://www.avaaz.org/en/petition/Ban_Fracking_Ireland/?tta)

4. **Visit the website Friends of the Earth Ireland** - <http://www.foe.ie/takeaction/ban-fracking/> **and email your TD**

## 5. You can also sign the petitions on face book -

Reporter Joan Walsh:

**'Wake up to Fracking!!!!'** - <https://www.facebook.com/#!/events/426571377380263/>

3 online Irish petitions in one place.

If you are on facebook - 'an event' was created to contain the 3 Irish online petitions to ban fracking in Ireland, North and South.

Link: <https://www.facebook.com/#!/events/426571377380263>

So it is a vehicle for the 3 online petitions, and it makes it easy for you to share all 3 petitions. All you need to do, is click on 'Join' (top right), then click on 'Invite friends' (invite ALL your fb friends).

Then click on 'See more' above on event page, and contained there are the links to the 3 online petitions.

You will receive an email (x 3) to confirm you have signed.

Please also post the link to the 'event' onto your own fb walls regularly and add your own explanation note to it.

Please use it. We can't do this without your help. Thanks. joan

### SUSMISSION TO EU

**European Commission consults public on unconventional fossil fuels (e.g. shale gas) in Europe**

**Deadline : March, 20, 2013**

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-12-1429\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1429_en.htm)

### PAD

**Write to the Petroleum Affairs Division of the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources (PAD)**

(see below, correspondence- letters)

## CORRESPONDENCE – LETTERS

For those who missed this:

**To the Petroleum Affairs Division of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources ('PAD')**

Dear Madam/Sir,

In [energy-pedia news](#) (30 Nov 2012) I read, "Enegi has submitted a report summarising the studies and analysis that the Company has carried out to the Petroleum Affairs Division of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources ('PAD')."

In the [Irish Examiner](#) (1 Dec 2012) I read that a "department spokeswoman confirmed it has also received a report from Tamboran on its license option."

There is public interest in the licensing procedure of such explorations.

For openness and transparency during the procedure I wish to ask the Petroleum Affairs Division of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources ('PAD'), to publish the industry reports from these two companies.

I also wish to ask the Division to publish any further analyses, studies and reports it receives from companies applying for shale gas exploration.

Sincerely,

Charlie Williams

The reply:

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The Department does not publish confidential and commercially sensitive technical assessments/reports relating to petroleum authorisations. Section 27 of the Freedom of Information Act 1997 provides that:

*A head shall refuse to grant a request under section 7 if the record concerned contains*

*(a) trade secrets of a person other than the requester concerned,*

*(b) financial, commercial, scientific or technical or other information whose disclosure could reasonably be expected to result in a material financial loss or gain to the person to whom the information relates, or could prejudice the competitive position of that person in the conduct of his or her profession or business or otherwise in his or her occupation, or*

*(c) information whose disclosure could prejudice the conduct or outcome of contractual or other negotiations of the person to whom the information relates.*

Regards

Jim  
Jim Whelan  
Petroleum Affairs Division  
Tel + [353 1 6782691](tel:35316782691)

Comment by a campaigner:

(...) On their website they have nothing about potential project benefits - it all seems so secretive and that can't be right. We need to see these documents.

We do have people though **so if all the local groups get organised to write, call, protest en masse, use every tool at our disposal until our demands are met.**

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## **Letter to the Irish Times from Cillian in Clare**

### **The debate over fracking**

Sir, – Neil C Oliver (December 28th) highlights the potential damage to our fresh water supplies from fracking. This same process will also have a serious negative impact on how Irish food products are perceived by our export markets abroad, worth nearly €9 billion in 2012.

While there is an ongoing acrimonious dispute worldwide as to whether fracking is a good or bad thing, the issue that should concern Bord Bia, local farm producers and all of the major international food producers, such as Glanbia, etc, is one of perception.

Irish food exports have an enviable, and well deserved, reputation worldwide as being some of the highest quality foodstuffs in the global marketplace. This reputation was hard won and maintaining the image, and indeed the reality, of clean and green farmland from where these products come from is of paramount importance if these export markets are to flourish and secure many local and international businesses into the future.

Full letter -

<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/letters/2012/1231/1224328278628.html>

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### **Giving away family silver or reaping a bonanza?**

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/business/giving-away-family-silver-or-reaping-a--218219.html>

**One of our campaigners** wrote a letter to the author of the above article. (see below) but, it seems that there is no proper email address, or address to comment to.

Dear editor,

Could you please provide me with the email or postal address of the freelance journalist John Hearne who wrote a poorly researched piece of journalism for yesterday's edition of your paper. I would like to send him some facts about fracking, a topic he is clearly unqualified to write about.

Many thanks.

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Dear Mr Hearne,

In your piece "Giving away family silver or reaping a bonanza?" published Tuesday, January 1, 2013, you state "The stage is set for another Corrib-style stand-off." Your statement is a blatant attempt to localise the nature of an activity whose negative impacts will be felt far beyond its licenced areas.

You display a rather poor understanding of the scale of proposed shale gas development in Ireland. Firstly, let's do something journalists used to do in the good ol' days: report the facts. First, some 1,600 square kilometres (419,832 acres) are licenced for shale gas extraction in the north west (Lough Allen Basin) and another 495 square kilometres (122,317 acres) in the

south west (Clare Basin). What this means is thousands of concrete well pads each seven acres in size and containing up to 24 gas wells each placed two kilometres apart, accompanied by radioactive wastewater pits the size of Olympic-sized swimming pools to contain the huge volumes of flowback water used in the fracking process, noisy compressor stations running 24/7 and heavy tanker traffic on rural roads.

So you may have guessed by now that this is not your conventional gas drilling; unconventional gas development is a spatially intense activity requiring large scale industrialisation, the likes of which Ireland will never have seen. It is spatially intense because the gas is trapped in tiny pockets in the shale (or in some cases, sandstone) layers, and if extraction of the gas is to be any way economically viable large surface areas need to be exploited; there is no such thing as small scale unconventional gas development.

Second, the technique used to fracture rock is referred to as high-volume slick water horizontal hydraulic fracturing (HVHF) and has only been around for the best part of a decade, not for 60 years as the industry likes to have us believe. You might want to employ the precise term when reporting on this issue in the future so as to avoid any confusion among your readers.

If the Irish government greenlights shale gas, we can wave goodbye to our indigenous, sustainable industries of farming, agri-food and tourism, each of which generates billions of euro more in revenue than shale gas development ever will. As we know from North America and Australia, these three industries have been badly hit due to the large scale industrialisation that comes part and parcel of unconventional gas development. Unless we find ways to farm on concrete well pads or expect tourists to visit landscapes blighted by hideous concrete well pads and equally hideous ancillary infrastructure, farming and tourism are set to lose millions in revenue and will be hit by significant job losses. So while the industry may not operate in every county, the negative economic impacts will certainly be felt nationally.

For a small island economy, Ireland is playing Russian roulette if it grants licences to this 'loot and scoot' industry, the nature of which is certain to drive our country into further economic ruin.



**From one of our campaigners**

**New Year begins with two PR type articles in today's Indo and Irish Examiner. Can expect to see lots more in coming months I expect to coincide with the Irish presidency of the EU with the focus on jobs and growth. The campaign really needs to making better efforts to counter this propaganda through its own media, writing rebuttals to pieces like these, etc. The UK campaign seems to very good at this sort of thing.**

"Perhaps the most significant story of 2012 was the prediction that US oil output is poised to surpass [Saudi Arabia](#)'s within four years, making the world's biggest fuel consumer almost self-reliant and putting it on track to become a net exporter.

The prediction, made last month by the [International Energy Agency](#), is based on the new fracking techniques that allow companies to extract vast amounts of oil and gas from places that produced nothing until recently.

### **Threat**

The technique can damage the environment, and the way oil production is measured is open to debate, but the basic fact remains: new techniques mean that the US, like Ireland, could soon move from being an importer of oil to an exporter.

This could have profound effects on everything from oil prices to politics in the [Middle East](#) – it will be interesting to examine US engagement in places like [Iraq](#) as demand for oil disappears."



<http://www.independent.ie/business/irish/oil-and-gas-discoveries-to-energise-recovery-of-the-economy-3339904.html>

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"Then there's fracking. Not all the fuel under discussion is offshore. The Lough Allen Basin is thought to contain 9.4tn cubic feet of gas and 1.5bn barrels of oil. The favoured method of extracting it is hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, a process vehemently opposed by environmentalists. Banned in France, the first company to explore for shale gas in the UK suspended its fracking activity in Lancashire in 2011 as it caused two minor earthquakes.

Though banned by Sligo and Donegal County Councils, Richard Moorman, chief executive of Tamboran Resources said on Ocean FM last year that fracking would go ahead in the area.

The stage is set for another Corrib-style stand-off. "

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/business/giving-away-family-silver-or-reaping-a--218219.html>

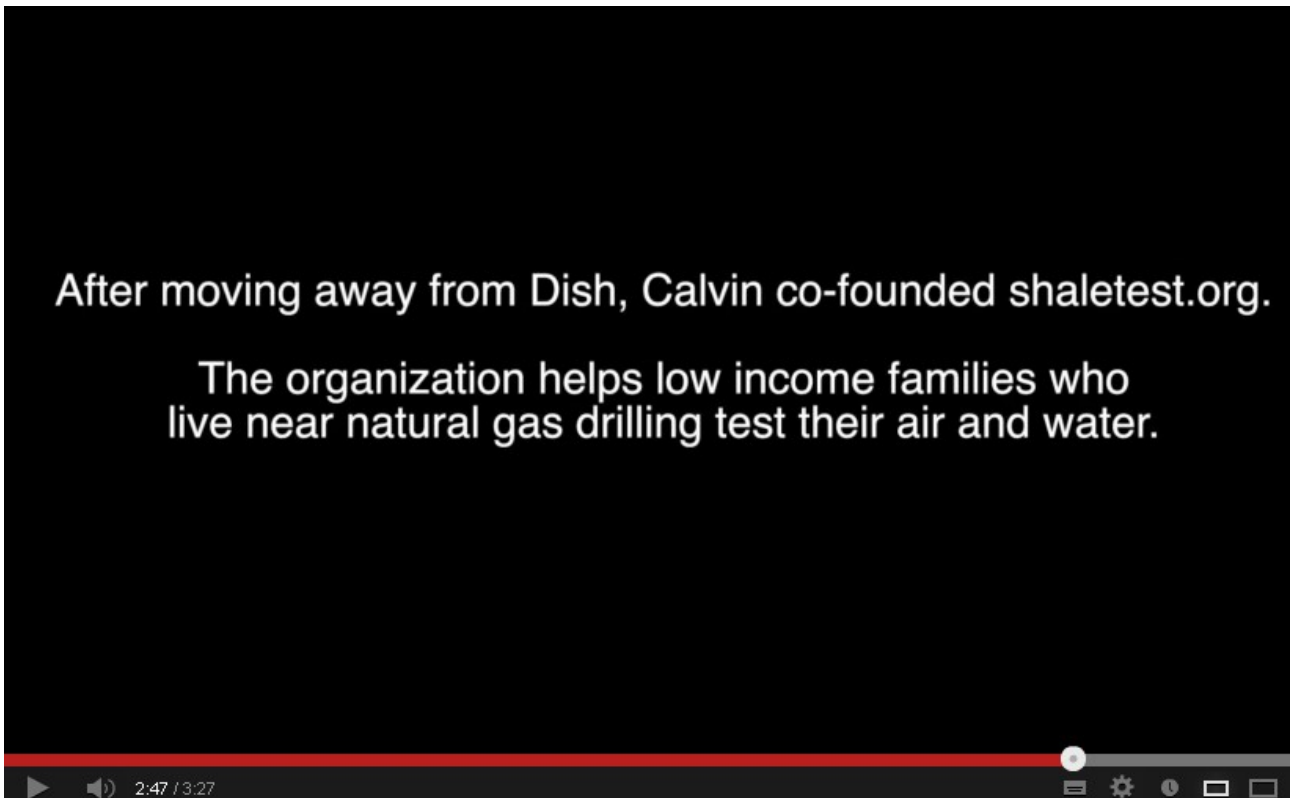
## MOVIES- SONGS

**Lecture on Fracking** by Dr. Anthony Ingraffea—Dwight C. Baum Professor of Engineering, Weiss Presidential Teaching Fellow at Cornell University and president of [Physicians, Scientists and Engineers for Healthy Energy, Inc.](#),  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSWmXpEkEPg&feature=player\\_embedded#!](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSWmXpEkEPg&feature=player_embedded#!)

**Interview** at <http://www.desmogblog.com/2013/01/03/meet-anthony-ingraffea-industry-insider-implacable-fracking-opponent>



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Frsg0cqRpBM&feature=youtu.be> 10 December 2012



Reporter: Calvin Tillman  
Former Mayor, DISH, TX / Citizens' Advocate



**Fracked** - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZLu5WGeM-0&feature=endscreen&NR=1>  
Published on 5 Jun 2012

After wells were fracked near her home, scientist **Jessica Ernst's** water is now so contaminated that it can now be lit on fire. Ernst is suing EnCana Corporation, the Alberta

Energy Resources Conservation Board, and the Alberta government for contamination of her property and drinking water

Speaking to worldwide audiences, Ernst has traveled to Ireland and to the United Nations in New York City where she received UNANIMA International's "Woman of Courage" award for her efforts to hold companies accountable for environmental harm done by fracking.

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## IRISH NEWS

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### Richard Moorman: Notes from the Shale Gas Trenches -

[http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/tamboran-resources-richard-moorman-shale-gas-ireland?utm\\_source=Natural+Gas+Europe+Newsletter&utm\\_campaign=69b8a3ee5f-RS](http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/tamboran-resources-richard-moorman-shale-gas-ireland?utm_source=Natural+Gas+Europe+Newsletter&utm_campaign=69b8a3ee5f-RS)



The former CEO of [Tamboran Resources](#), Richard Moorman was determined to convince the public in Ireland of the benefits of developing their unconventional gas resources. It was not an easy job, but for months he was on the ground at public forums engaging with locals and answering their questions - a formidable task.

At the end of September this year, Mr. Moorman stepped down as CEO, but remains a technical advisor at Tamboran.

Of the change he comments, "The company's going in a bit of a different direction. They're aggressively pursuing a joint venture party for the Australian assets and so the company is essentially going slower in Ireland. It became impossible to keep the pace there."

Ahead of the [European Unconventional Gas Summit](#), taking place in Vienna, [Austria](#) 29-31 January 2013, Mr. Moorman offered *Natural Gas Europe* his perspectives on shale gas in Europe.

*You were on the ground and engaging the public face-to-face in [Ireland](#). How would you assess the public's mood there today towards the development of unconventional gas?*

I think the mood is positive. We have to be careful when we talk about this, because the exploration companies shouldn't be considered a consumer product - we're not trying to sell a beverage to a wide spread of people.

We really need to provide a product that meets safety requirements, that provides essential energy - but to say it simply, the typical person on the street probably doesn't need to be any more for or against natural gas than they are for electricity, for example. It's just a product that's a part of life.

The opposition forces tend to try and isolate - shale gas, sometimes even wind, or coal - and those are personal opinions which are very important to them, and part of the process, but it really isn't the battle for 50% of the public's support; it's really about, is this an essential product that's needed, and then how do we go about making sure that it's done safely?

So I spent a lot of time considering public opinion in Ireland, mainly because it was so new to Ireland - considering having its own supply of natural gas and the industry that comes with that. But otherwise it's not really about working to get people to like gas; it is the way it is:

almost one quarter of the island's total energy is powered by natural gas.

*Given your experiences in Ireland, how would you assess the overall prospects for the development of unconventional gas in Europe?*

The European experience so far has been frustrating.

Certainly [Cuadrilla](#) in the [UK](#), sitting on what appears to be a very viable asset, had the misfortune of setting off tremors on their first fracture stimulation and subsequently the report has come out that showed that there were steps they could take to prevent that from happening, but that's in the record.

In Poland I think it was overemphasized in the beginning - kind of like a land rush - and everybody got out of perspective on it, forgetting how long it took for things to actually succeed in the United States and that new projects require a lot of effort.

Unfortunately, in [Poland](#) we've seen operators like [ExxonMobil](#) drill two wells and then back out. That's just poor practice. The bottom line is, in the US most of these shale projects took dozens of wells and it's not realistic to think that someone can solve these problems in a couple of wells.

It's been disappointing in the sense that some companies exaggerated the ease with which it would come. I think that most of them believed it themselves, because most of those companies didn't actually have hands-on, self-generated experience in the US. Exxon had acquired companies there such as [XTO](#), but they themselves were not significant unconventional developers.

In Poland, only [BNK](#) has real hands-on experience that they've brought over from the US, and I think their approach is consistent with the way you need to do these things: you keep working at it. And as long as people are willing to do that, I think that Poland will be successful, the UK play will be successful and I think when the Irish government finally has its rules in place that shale gas will be successful there, too, but unfortunately all these things take time.

*There are movements, but it looks uncertain whether the EU will enact regulation specifically for shale gas. Do you think such broader regulation could reassure policymakers?*

I say yes, but regulation means different things to me than it does to other people. Some hear that word and they run away from it, because they think it just means 'red tape', extra bureaucrats and more forms to be filled.

The kind of regulation I think Europe needs more of with respect to unconventional gas are related to a clear monitoring of what's going on, a clear presentation of development plans before they are initiated and a clear enforcement procedure for companies that violate their own commitments and the rules that are put out.

It really can't be useful for people to take risks with water or air contamination. There's no reason that that has to happen - the technology and the processes are there to prevent all of this. So while the situational occurrences are quite rare in the US, even if one were to say it happens in one in a thousand wells, that's still one in a thousand too many times and can be prevented.

In Europe a lot more can be done by the regulatory authorities to really try and understand unconventional gas, to make sure that companies declare what they're going to do upfront, that they are monitored while they're doing it - that we don't have any surprises, and finally so that there's enforcement, because without that there's no way that the public can trust that the rules mean anything.

*Recently an official from [OMV](#) was quoted as saying Europe risks its competitiveness by not developing unconventional gas. What are your thoughts regarding that?*

I think it's a fair statement, but I'd probably broaden it to say that at all times, countries are all dependent on energy, and lowering the cost of that energy makes them more competitive; unfortunately, the reality is that the world is continuing to grow aggressively, particularly in Asia and that represents a significant pull on energy and keeps the price of energy rising.

In the US, the shale gas effect has substantially reduced the price of natural gas, going from

about USD 14/TCF in 2008 to less than USD 2/TCF within the last year - that's a substantial savings, and when you get about one quarter of your energy from natural gas, that does make you overall much more competitive as a nation.

Europe's challenge is that it is ultimately dependent upon imports. Some 40% of their natural gas comes from Russia and the Middle East, and that will only rise over time without shale. Since those prices are guaranteed to be closer to oil-indexed pricing, whereas the US natural gas prices are completely broken from oil prices, then it's almost a certainty that Europe's prices will be much higher, making it less competitive.

Does that mean you should spend every penny you can to develop shale gas? No. It still has to be done in perspective, done responsibly. But if your energy costs keep rising and other countries have that under control, then you're not going to be as competitive. I think western nations are already under pressure from the role of Asia - they can't afford to have expensive energy.

*What would you suggest to the industry in Europe to help push things forward?*

First of all, I think the industry needs to do a much better job of communicating what it's actually doing and intends to do rather than relying on government regulators to provide cover. The reality is, that's not the government's business. If we're working in someone's community, then it's our business to make sure that the community knows what we intend to do; the government needs to make sure that we do it, but it's our responsibility to do that and a lot more.

Several European shale companies do this in their local communities, but it's not necessarily seen beyond those, and there's a lot more work that could be done there.

The other thing is, they could do well to stop blanket opposition to any kind of regulation. It seems like the knee-jerk response for every industry when asked for more regulations to protect the public is to oppose them instead of working with the responsible authorities to make sure they're better for both sides. So I think the industry could do a lot more to cooperate.

One of the challenges is, all these business are competitive and so to a certain extent you have people feeling that they have to hold on to their technologies or their efforts, minimize their spending and participating in all these things can be expensive. That attitude has to change about the public - it needs to be recognized that the public is essential to the success of energy; really in terms of all science, if we don't start getting more public support for what we're doing and the chance to understand it - if we don't do that as a society, we'll find it increasingly difficult to do those projects that are essential to society. And I think the natural gas industry is no exception to this.

People have taken too long to get shale gas off the ground already to the point that some people believe it won't happen now. At the same time, it's so important that we get lower cost and more plentiful energy supplies, especially in Europe for an economic boost.

*What are your views on natural gas and competition from subsidized renewables in Europe?*

Subsidies are a policy decision and they should reflect what people want. Sometimes people want more than we can afford, so the challenge, I think, for government is to balance a sufficient amount of investment in renewables and subsidization for the future, with the current need to keep energy costs as low as possible, and certainly to keep industries going today that do provide jobs.

That's a tricky business, and that's why I'm glad I'm not in politics. Ultimately, governments have to find a balance. I think there's a lot more work to be done in the renewables space, because we have to be realistic; hydrocarbons will not last forever, they will not keep growing past 100 years, so one way or another we're going to need more sustainable energy products.

My personal opinion is that today, on average, renewables cannot supply a substantial amount of the energy needed at an affordable cost; a lot more work is needed to prove them up and to keep us going until renewables can take over the load.



### **Call For Govt To Listen To Warnings About Hydraulic Fracturing -**

Deputy Michael Colreavy, Sinn Féin spokesperson for Communications Energy and Natural Resources, has called on the government to listen to warnings about hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, before making a decision whether to grant an exploration licence for the process in Ireland.

Full story - [http://www.build.ie/construction\\_news.asp?newsid=156040](http://www.build.ie/construction_news.asp?newsid=156040)

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### **Fracking risk's significant-environmental health expert -**

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/fracking-risk-s-significant-environmental-health-expert-1219354>

(...)THE risk posed by fracking remains significant, a leading environmental health expert has said.

There are still too many unknowns and gaps in the evidence surrounding the emerging use of shale gas, the director of the Institute of Environmental Health in Northern Ireland said.

The Australian energy exploration firm Tamboran hopes to begin extracting gas in Fermanagh by early next year.

The director of the environmental health institute, Gary McFarlane, said: "The precautionary principle must still hold - there are still too many unknowns and in the evidence vacuum that still exists my own view is that wider risks must be considered significant until they have been objectively proved otherwise." (...)

**And an article in the Belfast telegraph -** <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/local-national/northern-ireland/fracking-risk-remains-significant-16257157.html>

(...) Although gas is the "cleanest" of the fossil fuels, there is a lack of scientific literature around the intensive method, according to a recent Canadian public health report. Its impact on community or mental health and socio-economic wellbeing has been questioned. (,,)

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## **EU -NEWS**

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### **Harkin calls for fracking issue to be addressed -**

<http://www.longfordleader.ie/news/business/harkin-calls-for-fracking-issue-to-be-addressed-1-4602846>

**Published on Sunday 23 December 2012 16:00**

Independent MEP Marian Harkin has called for a "full, comprehensive public consultation" in an effort to address the fracking issue in Ireland.

Speaking on the matter, the MEP for the north/west, said that a number of "fellow MEPs" had recently urged all EU Member States to "ban" fracking. "All this, despite the fact that EU and national rules remain insufficiently developed to ensure complete environmental and human safety, and this is most certainly the current situation in Ireland," Ms Harkin, MEP added.

Speaking from Brussels, the local MEP offered a tentative welcome to Minister Pat Rabbitte's decision to maintain a freeze on all hydraulic fracturing in Ireland, pending a comprehensive report which will be commissioned by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) early next year.

"This report's legitimacy as a blueprint for any future fracking in Ireland will only be guaranteed if a full public consultation is undertaken with environmental groups, local and community activists - including farmers, tourism interests and residents - and all other relevant stakeholders," Ms Harkin, MEP fumed. "Full community involvement - even in this preparatory phase - is the only way to ensure a balanced, sensible approach to this important study."

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## **POLAND**

### **Poland's New Dissidents\_**

"I heard you've come to Poland to write about shale gas", my young, blond-haired landlord said right after handing me the keys to his renovated pre-war apartment in downtown Warsaw.

I nodded.

"Shale gas is very important for Poland", he quickly added, as if in a hurry to impress the words. "It's very important for our independence."

Today Poland is independent of course, fiercely so, but nobody quite seems to believe it. The Polish white-and-red flag flies over government buildings in Warsaw, but there is another flag - white-blue-red - that still rises menacingly in the east. It is Russia's and that extra blue stripe signifies only one thing these days: natural gas.

Gazprom pipelines, which supply almost two-thirds of Polish gas, are the final link in the long chain of oppression, many Poles believe. It is the reason why the mood all over Poland was euphoric when the U.S. Energy Information Administration announced that Poland may hold up to 5.3 trillion cubic meters of shale gas, enough to make the country "a second Norway" (in the words of the Polish foreign minister Radoslaw Sikorski), energy independent pretty much for perpetuity.

"After years of dependence on our large neighbor, today we can say that my generation will see the day when we will be independent in the area of natural gas and we will be setting terms," the prime minister of Poland, Donald Tusk, told the media in 2011. Even when, later, the Polish Geological Institute, in collaboration with the U.S. Geological Survey, lowered those mindboggling numbers by as much as 90%, the euphoria did not dissipate. Poland was going to be independent from Russia at all costs, if only for a couple of decades.

Full story - - [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/dimiter-kenarov/polands-new-dissidents\\_b\\_2411664.html?utm\\_hp\\_ref=tw](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/dimiter-kenarov/polands-new-dissidents_b_2411664.html?utm_hp_ref=tw)

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## **GLOBAL NEWS**

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### **CANADA**

**From our courageous Jessica Ernst...**



**lots more posted to the website, no time to copy and paste into emails to send out. encana drilling yet another deviated well near my property, south side of the rosebud river this time. rig went up today. i dont know if it is to be frac;d above base of groundwater protection or not. a few shots:**



**ernst vs encana et al next day in court is:**

**Friday Jan. 18 at Court of Queen's Bench  
Suite 705-N, 601 - 5th St SW, Calgary T2P 5P7**

**10 AM to 4 PM**

**This will be one day hearing only. It is not the trial, we are years away from that yet.** This will be a hearing where ERCB gets to fight the motion they filed to get my case thrown out (they are using various arguments: there was no Charter breach, they owe Albertans w contaminated water no duty of care, assassinate my character claiming they had to do what they did to me to prevent eco-terrorism and protect the public, ERCB, and Alberta oil and gas industry. the ERCB never pressed charges, had me arrested or fingerprinted, and did not take out a restraining order against me). Alberta Government will fight to get paragraphs in the fresh statement of claim that mention other contaminated ww's in the community struck out. both are asking the court that i be ordered to pay their costs.

Our legal briefs in response were filed in Drumheller court December 21, 2012, and are now available in PDF. if anyone wants copies let me know (the brief in response to the ERCB is an amazing read - especially if you are an Albertan w a water well or you live in a country/province where synergy Alberta/ERCB are helping your govt deregulate; our brief in response to AENV is short, but an interesting read). They are not on the website. the defendants' briefs are also available. Encana didn't file anything because they are not trying to get my case thrown out, or any paragraphs struck, which is surprising.

Support via attendance in the court is gratefully welcome. Attendance makes strong statement to pollution-enabling, rights decimating politicians and "no duty of care" regulators everywhere.

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**Promised land (the movie) (In Europe in April)**

**28 Dec-4 Jan - Release of anti-fracking movie '[Promised Land](#)' (Global)**

- Worldwide release of the movie 'Promised Land'. Directed by Gus Van Sant it stars Matt Damon who plays a fervent shale gas developer who discovers some unwelcome truths behind the insatiable advance of the fracking industry in the US.
- The shale gas industry have already prepared cheat-sheets for organised pro-fracking groups to approach moviegoers outside theatres, they will attempt to paper over the cracks exposed by this movie.
- **Opportunity:** Chance to use the promote and support the underlying narrative of this movie: that shale gas extraction is a harmful process for the climate, local environment,

and people's lives, and that it is supported by powerful lobbyists who have access to decision-makers.

Promised land opened at the Empire on Country Hills in Calgary and cineplex at eau claire, more information on fracking multimedia page  
<http://www.ernstversusencana.ca/news-multimedia/fracing-multimedia>

'Fracking is so polarizing right now': Matt Damon on Promised Land by Bob Thompson, Postmedia News, January 3, 2012, Calgary Herald  
**"The movie asks a difficult question," Damon says of his latest project. "Do you take your daughter to the whorehouse when times are tough?"**  
<http://www.calgaryherald.com/entertainment/movie-guide/Matt+Damon+search+Promised+Land/7769108/story.html>

**comments to this article worth a read:**

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/industry-news/energy-and-resources/energy-industry-slams-matt-damon-fracking-film-as-hollywood-fiction/article6938126/comments/>

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**excellent posts by debra rogers (energy policy forum) and amy mall (NRDC):**

<http://www.ernstversusencana.ca/canadian-authorities-fracking-operation-contaminated-groundwater>  
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## AUSTRALIA

Reporter:

Dr Mariann Lloyd-Smith PhD (Law)

Senior Advisor, IPEN - International POPs Elimination Network

Senior Advisor, National Toxics Network Inc.

Hi All,

Here is some media on the Glenugie blockade against coal seam gas in Australia. You can follow it or get more information at the facebook address below.

Police and the riot squad moved in today with many arrests, but this will not be the end.

[Melissa Green posted in The Glenugie Action \(Australian Action Alliance\) Ongoing](#)

Glenugie blockade is being reported on:

### **CSG protest action heating up at Glenugie**

**Anti-coal seam gas protesters say the riot squad is at an extraction site south of Grafton, preparin...**

- ABC NEWS: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-01-07/csg-protest-action-heating-up/4454746>

- The Daily Examiner: <http://www.dailyexaminer.com.au/news/police-at-glenugie-blockade-as-drill-rig-moves-in/1707693/>

- PRIME7 News: <http://au.prime7.yahoo.com/n1/news/a/-/state/15773452/csg-standoff-escalates-as-police-target-blockade/>

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## REPORTS - RESEARCH

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### EU

#### **Report - Accounting rules and action plans on greenhouse gas emissions and removals resulting from activities related to land use, land use change and forestry - A7-0317/2012 - Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety**

03-01-2013 02:25 PM EET

REPORT on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on accounting rules and action plans on greenhouse gas emissions and removals resulting from activities related to land use, land use change and forestry  
Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety  
Kriton Arsenis

**Source : © European Union, 2012 – EP**

<http://links.govdelivery.com/track?type=click&enid=ZWFzPTEmbWFpbGluZ2lkPTIwMTMwMTAzLjEzOTM2ODExJm1lc3NhZ2VpZD1NREItUFJELUJVTC0yMDEzMDEwMy4xMzkzNjgxMSZkYXRhYmFzZWlkPTEwMDEmc2VyaWFsPTE2ODkxMDczJmVtYWlsaWQ9Z3JpbmdAdWxiLmFjLmJlJnVzZXJpZD1ncmluZ0B1bGIuYWMuYmUmZmVw9JmV4dHJhPU11bHRpdmFyaWF0ZUIkPSYmJg==&&&100&&&http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A7-2012-0317&format=XML&language=EN>

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#### **EPA fracking study may dodge some tough questions**

<http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2013-01-06/epa-fracking-study-may-dodge-some-tough-questions> (6 January 2013)

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#### **Hazardous Air Pollutants Detected Near Fracking Sites**

By Lisa Song 2012-12-04T00:02:27Z  
InsideClimateNews.org --

For years, the controversy over natural gas drilling has focused on the water and air quality problems linked to hydraulic fracturing, the process where chemicals are blasted deep underground to release tightly bound natural gas deposits.

But a new study reports that a set of chemicals called non-methane hydrocarbons, or NMHCs, is found in the air near drilling sites even when fracking isn't in progress.

According to a peer-reviewed study in the journal Human and Ecological Risk Assessment, more than 50 NMHCs were found near gas wells in rural Colorado, including 35 that affect the brain and nervous system. Some were detected at levels high enough to potentially harm children who are exposed to them before birth.

The authors say the source of the chemicals is likely a mix of the raw gas that is vented from the wells and emissions from industrial equipment used during the gas production process.

The paper cites two other recent studies on NMHCs near gas drilling sites in Colorado. But the new study was conducted over a longer period of time and tested for more chemicals than those studies did.

"To our knowledge, no study of this kind has been published to date," the authors wrote.

The researchers took weekly air samples at a site that's within one mile of 130 gas wells in Garfield County, Colo., with little other industry aside from natural gas production. They



detected more than 50 chemicals between July 2010 and October 2011, including 44 with reported health effects. The highest concentrations were measured after new wells were drilled, but the concentrations did not increase after the wells were fracked.

Carol Kwiatkowski, one of the study's authors, said that because of limitations on funding and access to drilling sites, the study doesn't definitively link the gas fields to the air pollutants. But because the research was conducted in a region with few people and roads, "natural gas drilling would be the first thing anyone would look at."

What the study shows, she said, is that more research is needed on all stages of gas production. "It's not all about fracking. ... Air pollution needs more focus and scrutiny."

Kwiatkowski is executive director of the Endocrine Disruption Exchange (TEDX), a nonprofit research organization in Colorado that studies the impact of environmental pollutants on the endocrine system, a network of hormone-producing glands that affects nearly every organ in the body. TEDX has spent years studying the health effects of natural gas drilling, and its reports are routinely criticized by the industry.

Kathleen Sgamma, vice president of government and public affairs at Western Energy Alliance, which represents oil and gas drillers in the American West, said the TEDX scientists have produced "a study that clearly doesn't come up with the results they're trying to show." Sgamma questioned the scientists' qualifications, as well as the quality of the journal that published their findings. "This was clearly not a well-thought out and well peer-reviewed study," she said.

But Robert Jackson, a professor of energy and environmental studies at Duke University who was not involved in the research, said the study is valuable because it shows that more study is needed about how drilling affects communities near gas fields.

"There's the question of whether there are long-term health effects," he said. "It warrants a follow-up [health] study."

Many residents of the sparsely populated area live within a mile of active wells. As gas drilling expands throughout the nation, production is moving closer to populated areas, with wells in some states now being drilled within a few hundred feet of schools and homes.

All of the chemicals TEDX detected were at levels well below the limits the federal government recommends to protect workers from dangerous chemicals. However, those standards are usually designed for healthy adult males who are exposed to the chemicals on and off for 40 hours a week. Scientists say the risks would likely be different for people—including pregnant women, children and the elderly—who live near gas fields and are exposed 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"We've been overlooking these non-methane hydrocarbons until now," said Theo Colborn, president of TEDX and the paper's lead author. "They've been measured before in cities ... otherwise, no one has looked at [them] as related to natural gas drilling in rural areas."

### **What the Scientists Found**

Non-methane hydrocarbons are emitted by industrial equipment and also by unprocessed natural gas.

When an operator drills a new well, most of the raw gas that flows out of the ground is methane—the target compound that's collected and sold. The gas also contains water and dozens of NMHCs, including the carcinogen benzene. On average, NMHCs account for 18 percent of the unprocessed gas and are released into the air at various stages of production.

John Starck, an engineer and president of EGL Resources, a Texas oil and gas company, said very little raw gas escapes during the initial drilling phase, because the gas-bearing rock is so impermeable. Once the well has been fracked, the quantities of NMHCs released would be on

the order of parts per thousand or parts per million, unless there is a leak, he said.

The NMHCs in the study were detected at levels of parts per million, parts per billion and parts per trillion, but the endocrine system is so sensitive that even tiny doses can lead to large health effects. Federal safety standards rarely consider the impacts of low dosage testing, an omission that scientists say should be addressed.

The study's authors detected thirty NMHCs that affect the endocrine system. Several belong to a class of compounds called polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and were detected at levels that other scientists have found are high enough to impact child development. In those studies, clinical researchers gave pregnant women living in cities personal air monitors, then tracked their children's development. Women exposed to a certain level of PAHs were more likely to have children with lower birth weight and lower IQ scores.

One chemical found at surprisingly high levels was methylene chloride, a common laboratory solvent. It's not a component of raw gas and doesn't appear on any of the public disclosure forms of chemicals used during drilling and fracking. "However, residents and gas field workers have reported that methylene chloride is stored on well pads for cleaning purposes," the authors wrote.

Robert Howarth, a Cornell University scientist who wasn't involved in the study, said the presence of methylene chloride points to a need for better chemical disclosure laws. "Methylene chloride is a surprise...We need a lot more information on what's used at drilling sites overall."

While drilling companies are required to disclose many of the chemicals used for fracking, they are usually allowed to keep proprietary chemicals secret. Drilling and cleaning compounds are rarely, if ever, subject to public disclosure.

Sgamma, the industry representative, said she was not aware of methylene chloride being used on well pads. She said the samples were probably contaminated in the lab.

Kwiatkowski said TEDX considered that possibility and ran blank samples to test for contamination. They didn't find methylene chloride in the blanks, but found it "over and over again" in the collected air samples.

### **Study Limitations**

The TEDX study was inspired by years of complaints about headaches and respiratory problems the researchers had heard from people living near gas wells. Many of the symptoms began the moment drilling started, long before the wells were fracked, Kwiatkowski said.

That prompted the scientists to study air quality before and after drilling. They identified a well pad slated for drilling and set up an air sampling station near a home 0.7 miles from the well pad. There were 130 active gas wells within one mile of the site.

Kwiatkowski said the ideal sampling station would have been located directly on the well pad, but TEDX has had little success persuading the industry to cooperate with its research, so the researchers didn't ask for access to the well pad. They also didn't want to draw unwanted attention to their work. Local residents are divided when it comes to the benefits and risks of gas drilling, and Kwiatkowski said they didn't want to cause trouble among neighbors. Their choice of location was further constrained by the need for a constant source of electricity and the need to protect the station from possible vandalism.

The scientists took a partial set of baseline data on July 2010, before any wells had been drilled on the pad. On October 19, after residents called to report activity on the well pad, the scientists rushed in to take a full set of baseline readings. The first well was drilled three days later.

Air sampling continued weekly until October 2011. All samples were analyzed in EPA-certified

labs. The scientists tested for more than 100 chemicals and found over 50 at levels high enough to be detected by their instruments.

When the dates of the drilling and fracking activity were posted online, in accordance with Colorado's disclosure laws, the scientists learned that the company had drilled 16 wells on the well pad between October 2010 and March 2011. Two other well pads were drilled starting in April and July. Fracking followed the drilling. About 100 other wells within a mile already were producing gas and were neither fracked nor drilled during the study period.

The data showed a major spike in chemical concentrations after the first 16 wells were drilled, but not after fracking. The increase was significant when compared with the baseline samples collected before the drilling, as well as samples from most of the year after drilling stopped.

Colborn said that suggests the increased emissions are linked to the raw gas released from drilling—but she said there's no way to tell for sure, because they couldn't directly sample emissions from the well pad. Colborn said TEDX and other scientists are already making plans for a follow-up study to chemically fingerprint the source of the pollutants.

Jackson, the Duke University scientist, said the paper hasn't convinced him that the increased emissions are directly tied to the well pad it studied instead of the combined effect of the region's natural gas operations.

He said the evidence is weak because the spikes occurred only during the middle two months of the five-month drilling period, and because the emissions could have originated from the 130 other wells in the region.

There's no question the study "is documenting air quality in that valley," he said, "and that's still valuable," especially when it comes to health implications for local residents.

### **Industry Questions Study's Credibility**

Sgamma, the industry representative, said the TEDX study "has all the problems you'd expect when a zoologist and psychologist attempt to conduct an air quality study."

The "zoologist" refers to Colborn, who helped pioneer the field of endocrine disruption in the 1980s and served on numerous government science panels. Colborn describes herself as an "environmental health analyst"—a term that reflects her multidisciplinary background in zoology, epidemiology, toxicology, freshwater ecology and water chemistry.

Kwiatkowski has a Ph.D. in experimental psychology and specializes in statistical analysis. She is a former assistant professor at the University of Colorado School of Medicine.

According to the TEDX website, the organization runs on three basic principles: rigorous scientific analysis, promoting education on endocrine disruption and advocating policy to protect public health and the environment. Kwiatkowski said she wasn't surprised by Sgamma's criticism, because TEDX has been willing to tackle issues that other scientists "might typically not want to go out on a limb for."

"What industry does is attack your reputation as a scientist," Kwiatkowski said. "Young scientists in particular can't afford to have their reputations challenged."

The TEDX study cites two recent studies with similar research goals—a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) from the University of Colorado School of Public Health and a pilot study led by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The HIA was commissioned in 2010 to examine the potential health affects of a pending gas drilling project in Garfield County, the same county Colborn's group examined, but the county commissioners cut its funding before it could be completed. A draft of the HIA from Feb. 2011 cited a 2007 air monitoring report that identified oil and natural gas production as the largest contributor of benzene in Garfield County.

The NOAA study, published in February by the Journal of Geophysical Research, found that oil and gas operations released more methane and benzene than previously thought. It used a chemical fingerprint to pinpoint drilling operations as the source of the contaminants, but it examined far fewer non-methane hydrocarbons than the TEDX paper.

Researchers from the Health Impact Assessment and a co-author of the NOAA study declined to comment on the TEDX paper. The lead author of the NOAA paper did not return requests for information.

Sgamma also questioned the researchers' decision to publish the paper in Human and Ecological Risk Assessment, which she said is not a "typical" destination for air quality studies.

Kwiatkowski said they chose the journal because they wanted it to reach scientists who study risk assessment.

Barry L. Johnson, the journal's editor-in-chief for the past 12 years, said the publication's first priority is the quality of the science in the manuscripts it receives. He said it has published papers written by industry researchers and that industry scientists serve on the journal's board. Johnson has worked for the EPA and the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and is an adjunct professor of public health and environmental policy at Emory University.

The TEDX paper was processed like any other study, Johnson said. It was sent to two scientists for peer review, both of whom have published widely on issues of air quality. The reviewers' names are kept private, he said, because his journal operates under a double-blind review system, where authors and peer reviewers are unaware of each others' identities in order to avoid potential conflicts of interest.

Johnson said his publication "deemed the [TEDX] paper, as we have deemed others dealing with air quality, as being relevant to the aim, purpose and scope of our journal." He said that Sgamma is welcome to submit formal comments on the paper.

The TEDX study is "clearly labeled and presented as an exploratory study," he said. "It has strengths and limitations—I don't know of any studies that don't. That's just how science works ... and this may contribute towards a better understanding of what's happening around gas operations."

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[www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-03/hazardous-air-pollutants-detected-near-fracking-sites.html](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-03/hazardous-air-pollutants-detected-near-fracking-sites.html)

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### **Would you like to contribute to keeping Ireland Fracking Free?**

If you find the Fracking Matters newsletter and the [frackingfreeireland.org](http://frackingfreeireland.org) website useful, please consider making a **contribution** to help fund my work. Simply click on the link provided.

Your contribution will help cover my ongoing expenses on behalf of the

campaign (printing, postage, travel, etc.) and help me to do much more.

Please help me to continue and expand my work to Keep Ireland Fracking Free. And watch this space (and the website) for the new projects that your help will make possible!

Thank you very much for your support,

Ineke Scholte

