The fracking industry’s dirty, risky pipeline sprawl affects everyone.

Across the U.S., an unprecedented boom in natural gas production using the controversial drilling technique known as hydrofracking, or “fracking” is under way. Fracking involves drilling thousands of feet underground into geological formations known as “shale beds,” injecting millions of gallons of water, toxic chemicals and silica sand under high pressure, and setting off explosive charges to release methane gas.

The fracking process is exempt from Federal regulations that were designed to protect us. Yet, studies show that fracking and gas extraction pollute the air and water where the drilling is done, causing people and animals to become sick, destroying wildlife habitats, and devastating communities.

Even in states where fracking is not done, people are at risk.

In the race to bring the gas to U.S. consumers and foreign markets, thousands of miles of new or expanded gas pipelines are being built. Additionally, compressor stations that emit toxins into the air are needed to push this gas through the pipelines. Too often, the individuals and communities affected are not aware of the pollution or health and safety risks, nor have they given their consent.

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What you can do.

Pipelines that are deemed unsafe, under-regulated, or that threaten human health or wildlife can be stopped. But it requires information, self-education and community engagement.

☑ Know your citizens’ rights and access the public documents related to pipelines in your community at the FERC website: www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/elibrary.asp.

☑ Find information about pipeline safety and how pipelines are regulated at:
  • Pipeline Safety Trust: www.pstrust.org/involved/links.htm

☑ Educate your community about the dangers of hydrofracking and the links to pipelines in your community. For a list of knowledgeable speakers on the topic contact your local community or environmental organization.

For more information contact:

We the people do not approve.

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Pipelines pollute.
Gas running through the nation’s 2.5 million miles of gas pipelines is not the “clean” fuel it is touted to be. It is made up of mostly methane, a very potent greenhouse gas. When methane leaks—which occurs at a rate of up to 4%—it is a threat to human health and harms fragile ecosystems.

Pipelines add to climate change.
Because methane is a more potent greenhouse gas than CO2, leaks and flaring from fracking and pipelines contribute to climate change—at exactly the time we need to invest in renewable energy if we are to avoid climate catastrophe.

Pipelines carry radioactive gas.
The Marcellus Shale formation contains high concentrations of naturally occurring radioactive materials (NORMs), including radium, which is released by fracking. Radon, a known carcinogen and the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers, is a decay product of radium. Radon can travel through pipelines and make its way into homes where it can be inhaled, a dangerous health threat, especially to children.

Pipelines bring noisy, polluting infrastructure.
Pipelines are part of a gas infrastructure build-out that includes compressor stations, metering stations and gas-fired power plants—all of which perpetuate our reliance on fossil fuels.

Pipelines will transport fracked gas overseas.
The nationwide web of pipelines and infrastructure does not give us energy independence. Industry plans to pipe fracked gas to export terminals for shipment overseas where it will command a higher price. The U.S. will be left with the damage.

Pipelines near water bodies are risky.
Shallow or exposed pipelines become easy targets for plowing, construction, or weather-related accidents, leading to explosions and fire. Where pipelines run near or beneath water bodies, they are subject to damage from high storm flows and other accidents, and can release gas and hazardous liquids that make their way into drinking water and the environment.

Pipelines can explode.
Gas pipeline spills, fires and explosions occur with alarming frequency in the US, leaving innocent people injured or dead, damaging homes and businesses, overwhelming first-responders, and terrorizing communities. According to a nonprofit group that monitors pipeline safety, every four days, three significant incidents occur in the U.S. And the number of incidents is on the rise.

Pipelines are under-inspected.
There aren’t enough workers to inspect the vast network of pipelines in the US. In fact, only 7% of all natural gas lines are subject to rigorous inspection criteria or are inspected regularly. As a result, members of the general public are more likely to identify oil and gas spills than the pipeline companies’ own staff or leak detection system.

New pipelines get “rubber stamped.”
Despite the myriad questions surrounding pipeline safety and health hazards, permit requests for pipeline projects are virtually “rubber stamped” by FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission), the obscure and remote federal agency charged with reviewing them. In 2012, the overwhelming majority of permit requests were granted, with minimal input from the communities affected.