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Drilling Down Series

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Drilling Down

Articles in the Drilling Down series from The New York Times examine the risks of natural-gas drilling and efforts to regulate this rapidly growing industry.

Questions, additional information or related tips can be sent to urbina@nytimes.com.

Oct. 19, 2011 | The Fine Print



Andrew Harrer/Bloomberg News

A natural gas drilling rig next to an impoundment pit in Washington County, Pa. Such pits are often used to store toxic drilling waste.

Rush to Drill for Natural Gas Creates Conflicts With Mortgages

By Ian Urbina

Over the past 10 years, as natural gas has become increasingly important to the nation's energy future, Americans have signed more than a million leases giving companies the rights to drill on their lands. Worried about property values, and landowners signing drilling leases without clearance, lenders are trying to reinforce restrictions.

[Documents: Mortgages and Gas Leases](#)

Aug. 3, 2011 | Evidence Surfaces



Jim Wilson/The New York Times

A Tainted Water Well, and Concern There May Be More

By Ian Urbina

Industry executives as well as regulators have said that fracking has never contaminated underground drinking water. But there is at least one documented case.

[Documents: A Case of Fracking-Related Contamination](#)

[Graphic: Contamination From Drilling](#)

June 27, 2011 | Widespread Skepticism



Kathy Chruscielski

Behind Veneer, Doubt on Future of Natural Gas

By Ian Urbina

Energy companies have worked hard to promote natural gas as the fossil fuel of tomorrow, and they have found reliable allies in Washington. But not everyone agrees.

- **S.E.C. Shift Leads to Worries of Overestimation of Reserves**
- **Federal Officials Quietly Question Shale Gas**

June 26, 2011 | Natural Gas Investments



Brandon Thibodeaux for The New York Times

Insiders Sound an Alarm Amid a Natural Gas Rush

By Ian Urbina

As investment floods into shale wells, concerns about their productivity are spurring talk of a bubble.

- **Sweet Spots, But Not Many**
- **Overestimating Natural Gas Production**
- **Industry Privately Skeptical of Shale Gas**

March 4, 2011 | An Agency's Limits



Kevin Moloney for The New York Times

Politics Seen to Limit E.P.A. as It Sets Rules for Natural Gas

By Ian Urbina

Amid pressure from the industry and Congress, federal regulators are divided over the scope of their powers, leading to limited enforcement and narrowed research.

- **Timeline of Lax Rules for the Natural Gas Industry**
- **The Debate Over the Hydrofracking Study's Scope**

March 2, 2011 | An Imperfect Solution



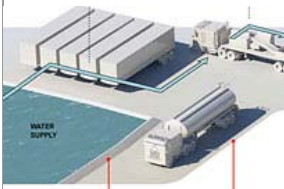
Alistair Fuller/Associated Press

Wastewater Recycling No Cure-All in Gas Process

By Ian Urbina

Though it has helped the natural gas industry reduce its wastewater, recycling has not eliminated all the hazards.

Politics, Recycling and Tracking of Natural Gas Waste



Chemicals and Toxic Materials That Come With Hydrofracking

By MIKA GRÖNDAHL, BILL MARSH and GRAHAM ROBERTS

An interactive graphic of waste disposal and other hazards in drilling for natural gas.

February 27, 2011 | The Waste Problem



Todd Heisler/The New York Times

Regulation Lax as Gas Wells' Tainted Water Hits Rivers

By Ian Urbina

A method to extract more natural gas often produces wastewater laced with toxic substances.

Natural Gas's Toxic Waste

Contaminants in Samples From More Than 200 Wells (Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet)



Video: Natural Gas and Polluted Air

By Erik Olsen

A method to extract more natural gas often produces wastewater laced with toxic substances.

Toxic Contamination From Natural Gas Wells



Extracting Natural Gas From Rock

By GRAHAM ROBERTS, MIKA GRÖNDAHL and BILL MARSH

An interactive graphic looking at the process and hazards of hydraulic fracturing.

Related Coverage

- Aug. 18, 2011 [New York Subpoenas Energy Companies Over Claims About Gas Wells](#)
- Aug. 11, 2011 [Panel Seeks Stiffer Rules for Drilling of Gas Wells](#)
- June 29, 2011 [Lawmakers Seek Inquiry of Natural Gas Industry](#)
- May 6, 2011 [Chu Names Panel to Study Fracking](#)
- April 16, 2011 [Chemicals Were Injected Into Wells, Report Says](#)
- April 7, 2011 [Pennsylvania Calls for More Water Tests](#)

Annotated Documents



DOCUMENTS

Natural Gas's Toxic Waste

Over the past nine months, The Times reviewed more than 30,000 pages of documents obtained through open records requests of state and federal agencies and by visiting various regional offices that oversee drilling in Pennsylvania.



DOCUMENTS

Politics, Recycling and Tracking of Natural Gas Waste

The most significant documents on wastewater recycling, with annotations from The Times.



DOCUMENTS

The Debate Over the Hydrofracking Study's Scope

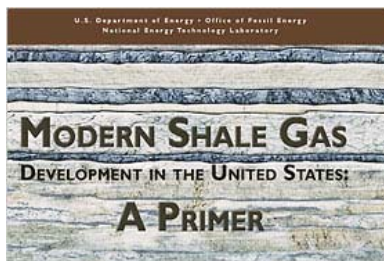
In 2010, Congress urged the Environmental Protection Agency to study the environmental impacts of hydrofracking. The study's findings may lead to changes to federal regulation of the industry.



DOCUMENTS

Industry Privately Skeptical of Shale Gas

Leaked industry e-mails and reports show growing concerns about a shale gas bubble.



DOCUMENTS

Federal Officials Quietly Question Shale Gas

Hundreds of industry e-mails, internal agency documents and reports by analysts show disagreement among government officials and public cheering despite private doubts.



DOCUMENTS

Mortgages and Gas Leases

Questions have emerged from bankers, credit union officials, insurers, real estate experts and appraisers about the potential impacts that oil and gas leases on residential and farm mortgages.

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