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WHAT THE FRACK!

What is fracking? According to ballotpedia.org, “Fracking is a method of oil and natural gas extraction. The process involves injecting fluid into subterranean rock formations at high pressure. The high-pressure fluid produces a fracture network that allows crude oil and natural gas inside dense rocks to flow into a wellbore and be extracted at the surface.” The United States is a place of greed and rapacity because we continue to practice the act of fracking even though [statistically it has been bad for the environment](#) and will continue to demolish it and help speed up the process of global warming.

According to businessinsider.com, fracking first started around the 1940’s, when Floyd Farris started a study between oil and gas production output and the amount of pressurized treatment being used on each well. The study led to the first experiment of hydraulic fracturing; which happened at the Hugoton gas field, which is located in Grant County, Kansas. While the experiment was being conducted 1,000 gallons of gelled gasoline and sand were injected into a gas producing limestone formation with a depth of 2,400 feet. Next there was an injection of a gel breaker. Even though the experiment was a failure, and did not produce a good amount of production increase, it still marks the beginning of hydraulic fracturing.

Fracking can lead to many health problems. Some health problems include respiratory problems, problems during pregnancy, stress and sleep deprivation, drinking water being

destroyed, and air pollution. According to [forbes.com](https://www.forbes.com), cough, shortness of breath, and wheezing are the most common complaints of residents living near fracked wells. Gases like benzene are released into the air which can damage the environment.

While there are cons to fracking, there are also significant pros. As stated by [conserve-energy-future.com](https://www.conserve-energy-future.com), some of the pros are access to more gas and oil, lower taxes, reduced dependency on foreign oil, and creates plenty of jobs for people wherever fracking is taking place. Fracking gives us more access to gas and oil because it reaches depths that other methods cannot. We now have more access to natural gas and oil than ever before. The reduced dependency on foreign oil helps because now we don't have to depend on other countries for oil and gas like many times before. Now we can just go in our own backyard for oil and gas. Finally fracking helps out communities by creating thousands of jobs for people around fracking sites.

Claimed by [inside-climate-news.org](https://www.inside-climate-news.org), Fracking is currently being practiced in twenty-one U.S states. There are few states that have actually put a ban on the practice. One example is New York's Gov. Andrew Cuomo banned the practice in the state of New York. He made this decision because his opinion on fracking is that it is a public health risk from water and air pollution, and unknown climate change impacts of extracting natural gas. Maryland also has concerns with the safety of fracking. They passed a moratorium that banned fracking for about a two year span. Also Massachusetts and Vermont are Two states that prohibit fracking. Fracking is done at different levels depending on which state it is. For example in Texas fracking is done at huge levels with a large amount of wells being used to extract gasses and oils, but in India they use few wells.

I can understand why some states would consider banning the practice of fracking. There are some bad events that happened during the fracking process throughout the country. For example in an article I found on www.desmogblog.com, talks about a pipeline explosion that occurred in Pennsylvania. It was said that a column of fire shot 150 feet in the air and it destroyed homes, barns, and several cars. The explosion also led to failed power lines. This left 1,500 people temporarily without electricity. Even Andy Dinniman of the Pennsylvania State Senate does not agree with the idea of fracking and even tweeted out “These kinds of pipelines shouldn’t be so close to our schools, residential neighborhoods & community centers. Mariner East should be permanently halted until we get real assurance that they’re being installed, inspected and operated with safety as a top priority”.

Another event that occurs from fracking are oil and gas spills. As stated by BBC.com up to 16% of hydraulically fractured oil and gas wells spill liquid every year. A study carried out by the US Environment Protection Agency on fracking in eight states between 2006 and 2012 concluded that 457 spills had occurred. The place that reports the most amount of spills is North Dakota. The information gathered said that there were 4,453 oil and gas spills in the state. This is more than Pennsylvania, Colorado, and New Mexico.

According to thinkprogress.org NASA discovered that fracking fuels global warming. They discovered that leaks from oil and gas production considerably fracking are a huge cause of pollution because of the methane that is being released into the air while fracking is being practiced. There are people that try and say that the ways we extract natural gasses such as fracking are safer for the environment but NASA’S studies prove that it is instead bringing negative effects to the environment.

Why do we continue to practice fracking even though it is creating problems and causing negative effects to our environment? I believe that it is a part of our country being money oriented. The fact that our county continues to practice something that puts such a negative effect on our environment shows me we are a place that cares more about money more than we do about our own environment even though our planet is dying at a rapid rate.

Farther in the future I think that we will come to our senses and decide to stop fracking or come up with a safer alternative. The only factor that I am concerned with is will it be too late by the time we want to take action. If it is too late then we could be in serious trouble with keeping our planet alive.

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