



Philadelphia City Council Misses Mark on Natural Gas

Geologist cites safety and necessity of Marcellus Shale development

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa., Feb. 2, 2011 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- In the midst of political debate over natural gas development in Philadelphia, Penn State Geosciences Professor [Michael Arthur](#) highlights the incongruities in local anti-fracing movements:

"Practically all U.S. natural gas development involves hydraulic fracturing, so it would be very difficult for consumers to discriminate specific natural gas sources because many are melded into gas storage fields or in transmission pipelines immediately following production.

"Natural gas has been developed in Pennsylvania for more than 100 years, and there have been more than 350,000 oil and gas wells drilled here—but Philadelphia has never previously considered a ban.

"People need to know that natural gas is a critical resource in a greener energy portfolio that reduces our carbon footprint and promotes energy independence. The hundreds of trillion cubic feet of extractable natural gas in our state alone are sufficient to provide more than 20 years supply at the United States' current rate of consumption. Moreover, recent advances in technology enable us to reach these deep shale gas resources with a smaller environmental footprint.

"However, many residents know little about the importance of the industry and how it fuels our economy and way of life. This is why Penn State is engaged in helping stakeholders better understand and evaluate both the benefits and challenges in natural gas development.

"The Philadelphia City Council needs to understand how integral natural gas is to the Commonwealth and how a significant portion of the city's homes, businesses and industries are powered by natural gas. Given the importance of natural gas, I hope the city council will reconsider and support the further development of this important domestic resource."

About Professor Michael A. Arthur

Michael A. Arthur, a geochemist and sedimentary geologist, is Penn State Professor of Geosciences. He is a past Department Head in Geosciences and is a recipient of the L.L. Sloss Medal in Sedimentary Geology (Geological Society of America), the Francis P. Shepard Medal for Marine Geology (Society for Sedimentary Geology, SEPM), the Wilson Awards for Research and Teaching in the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences, and is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Geophysical Union, and the Geological Society of America. His research interests include investigating the nature of climates and oceans of the past and the causes of past global change. He has long focused on studies of modern marine environments characterized by organic-carbon rich sediment deposits and the origin and nature of ancient "black shales." The geology of the Devonian Marcellus Shale is a current research emphasis through the efforts of the Appalachian Basin Black Shales Group (Engelder, Slingerland, and Arthur collaboration and students in the Department of Geosciences).

SOURCE Professor Michael Arthur

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