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## Permit process for Marcellus Shale drilling

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In 2010 alone, 1,386 Marcellus Shale wells were drilled in Pennsylvania. While none have yet been drilled in Schuylkill County, experts believe it is only a matter of time before a company takes the financial risk and drills a multimillion-dollar exploratory well.

Before that happens, companies must acquire the necessary permits and approvals:

Water withdrawal in connection with Marcellus Shale drilling must be approved; in the case of Rausch Creek Land, LP, which plans to withdraw water in the Porter Township area, the company's plan must first be

approved by the Susquehanna River Basin Commission; that approval typically takes at least several months.

Companies looking to drill within the Delaware River Basin must get approval from the basin's commission.

- Once the necessary water withdrawal approvals are in hand, a company may submit its Marcellus Shale drilling permit application to the state Department of Environmental Protection.

Schuylkill County companies would file those permit applications in DEP's Southwest Regional Office in Pittsburgh.

The application must include:

- The location of the proposed well;
- Its proximity to coal seams and surface water;
- Disposal of waste and wastewater plans;
- Proof of notification to the current property owner, if the land is being leased by an energy company; notification to all water suppliers within 1,000 feet of proposed well; notification to any coal landowners in the area; and notification of any fuel storage in the area.

Permits typically cost \$3,000 to \$4,000, depending on the depth of the proposed well.

With the application, companies must also file:

- A Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index Review; companies must enter the longitude and latitude of the well location into a computer database to be sure there are no endangered animals or plants in the area.

DEP typically approves or denies a permit application within about 45 days.

If it is approved, a company must then file a bond:

- \$2,500 per well;
- Or a \$25,000 blanket bond for companies planning multiple wells.

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection



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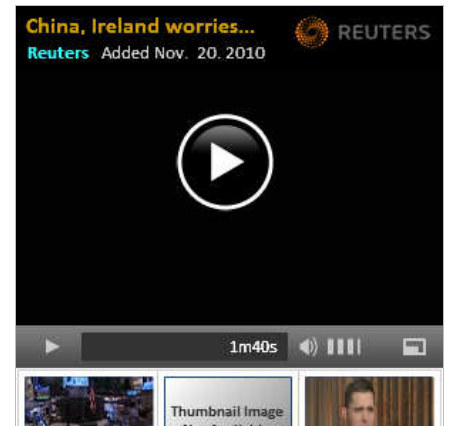
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What's plan B? Do these greedy corporations have a back-up plan after the land is completely destroyed and the water is contaminated? I doubt it.

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