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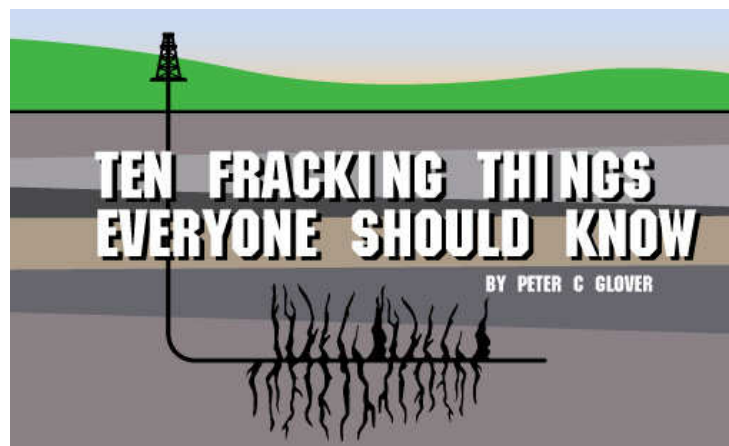
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Ten Fracking Things Everyone Should Know

By **Peter C Glover**
 Posted on Apr. 21, 2011



As dull headlines go it's on a par with the (almost certainly apocryphal) classic "Small earthquake in Chile. Not many dead". But "Hundreds rally against fracking" – the hydraulic fracturing procedure used in shale gas extraction – must be up there with the dullist.

Hundreds? Only *hundreds*? I can remember a time when just whispering the world's most powerful epithet "Big Oil" would have had eco-warriors everywhere reaching for their scaling ladders and megaphones. After all, even "progressives" need to keep up empty traditions.

Okay, the headline was only at a Time Warner online news site, so no one actually read it. I only picked up via a Google Alert. But the report did reveal just what got 'hundreds' out of their pits; even though quite a few seemed a little confused as to why they were protesting outside the Capitol building in Albany, New York State. One banner, the article reported, stated, "In NY state, no more drilling for fossil fuels". Another: "We want New York to lead the change". Some plainly thought it an anti-fossil fuel march, not a march against a particular method of extraction: hydraulic fracturing. Another proclaimed, "You can't drink gas". Pithy. Accurate. I like it.

The rather pathetically-attended Albany protest was even thought newsworthy north of the border. One Canadian paper ran the anti-fracking story headlining it, "Natural gas carries unexamined risks". So does getting out of bed in the morning – but let's stay focused. Sadly, the article's impact was somewhat diluted by a photo of a banner-waving biologist placarding the message: "Water Is Life Is Water". Albeit not an English major, we can applaud the sentiment – it's always good to hear science confirm the suspicions of generations of the common layman.

So just where were the expected hordes of treehuggers and concerned citizenry in Albany? Isn't the very water supply that we all share – including 'fracker' families, by the way – under threat? What has happened to the commitment of modern apocalyptic alarmists that they aren't able to bus in, on fossil-free vehicles presumably, legions of apocalypse-sometime-soon green street protestors?

Here's a fact that can be banked. The anti-fracking movement is the trendy new cause célèbre. Unfortunately, not many of those involved appear to have the slightest idea how long it's been used as a mining extraction process and that it has an incredibly safe antecedent history record. That is not to say that accidents don't happen or haven't taken place. It's the nature of the technological advancement beast that accidents – even negligence – will occur. Nor does it that infer some companies don't occasionally need their butt kicked to comply with regulatory oversight, such as cleaning up tail ponds, et al.

Essentially, however, the whole anti-fracking movement has its head where the sun doesn't shine – and here are just ten reasons why.

1. Hydraulic fracturing has been around for 60 years. Developments made by U.S. engineers around 2008-9 have simply made the process much more commercially viable.
2. Since fracking was introduced in 1949, over 2 million frack treatments have been pumped without a single documented case of treatments polluting a water

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