

MCM 2009-087

Resolution Opposing US Representatives DeGette and Polis Fracturing Responsibility and Awareness for Chemicals Act of 2009

WHEREAS, US Representatives DeGette and Polis have recently submitted for consideration by Congress the Fracturing Responsibility and Awareness for Chemicals Act of 2009 (FRAC Act) “to repeal the exemption for hydraulic fracturing in the Safe Drinking Water Act, and for other purposes” and

WHEREAS, Congresswoman DeGette represents Colorado’s House District 1 and Congressman Polis represents Colorado’s House District 2 both on the front range of Colorado consisting largely of the Greater Denver Metro and Boulder Area; and

WHEREAS, Representatives DeGette and Polis House Districts have little to no oil and natural gas development activity employing fracing technology and should at least extend the courtesy to fellow Congressmen in districts where this act would be applicable to sponsor it; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress passed the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) of 1974 to assure the protection of the nation's drinking water sources; and

WHEREAS, since the enactment of the SDWA, the United States Environmental Protection Agency has never interpreted hydraulic fracturing as constituting "underground injection" within the SDWA; and

WHEREAS, in 2004, the EPA published a final report stating that minimal threat was posed to underground sources of drinking water by hydraulic fracturing; and

WHEREAS, the Ground Water Protection Council (GWPC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of our Nation’s ground water resources and made up of state ground water protection agencies regulating hydraulic fracturing have produced findings from studies indicating that there are no documented cases of contamination involving hydraulic fracturing technology or fluids; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress, in the Energy Policy Act of 2005, explicitly exempted hydraulic fracturing from the provisions of the SDWA; and

WHEREAS, hydraulic fracturing has been used more than one million times in the last 60 years in exploration and production activities by the oil and gas industry across the nation with no harm to ground water supplies; and

WHEREAS, the regulation of oil and gas exploration and production activities, including hydraulic fracturing, is strictly regulated by the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission; and

WHEREAS, the SDWA was never intended to grant to the federal government authority to regulate oil and gas drilling and production operations, such as hydraulic fracturing; and

WHEREAS, the issue of hydraulic fracturing is critical to natural gas exploration and development in Mesa County and the neighboring Piceance Basin; and

WHEREAS, due to the nature of the geology within the surrounding area natural gas fields, natural gas extraction could not efficiently take place without hydraulic fracturing; and

WHEREAS, Mesa County is a regional trade center and is the location of many industrial support companies that service the natural gas industry: and

WHEREAS, onerous new regulations regarding hydraulic fracturing could stymie energy development in Mesa County and surrounding areas, cause detriment to Mesa County residents, increase costs to all consumers and decrease the economic vitality of the State; and

WHEREAS, hydraulic fracturing technology has opened up natural gas basins that would otherwise not be producible and has increased reserves resulting in lower commodity prices for consumers;

WHEREAS, due to the ignorance of elected officials in positions of authority introducing legislation that does nothing for the environment or protect public safety but only raises the cost of production and development of natural resources, we will most certainly be paying higher energy costs in the future impacting hard working men and women of our Country and County the most; and

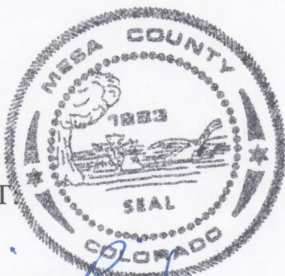
WHEREAS, we in Mesa County and the Piceance Basin of Colorado have managed to contribute successfully and very significantly to our Nation's energy demands in a manner respectful of the environment without the added oversight or regulation of Congress; and

WHEREAS, Mesa County has worked diligently on an Energy Master Plan to allow for energy development at the same time respecting our County's Natural assets, promoting a viable economy while maintaining or increasing the quality of life for County residents; and

WHEREAS, Mesa County supports, encourages and embraces best available technologies such as hydraulic fracturing and best management practices that mitigate the impacts of energy development or any other kind of human activity necessary to maintain our quality of life; and

WHEREAS, Mesa County respects and honors all the hard working men and women of the natural gas industry working, living, recreating, and raising families in Mesa County for providing a vital resource to our County and Nation with no appreciation by any Federal, State or Local elected officials for your innovation, technology and tireless efforts to keep our houses warm and illuminated;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Mesa County urges our federal legislators to maintain the exemption for hydraulic fracturing from the provisions of the SDWA and to not pass unneeded legislation that would negatively impact Mesa County's economy and increase our Nation's energy insecurity and dependence of foreign sources. Mesa County urges Congress and specifically Representatives DeGette and Polis to actually visit these areas where this technology is employed and learn about its historical use and current practice before enacting legislation that does nothing but empower government, increase bureaucratic controls, raise commodity prices to consumers and further discourage technology and innovation in an area much needed to promote our Country's future energy independence and security.



ATTEST

Janice Lick

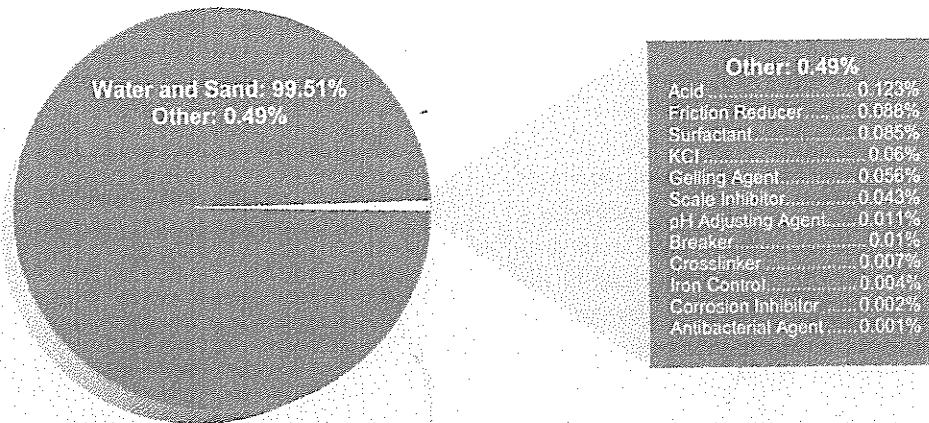
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by Roberta Raby, deputy

Mesa County Board of County Commissioners

Steven Acquafresca
Steven Acquafresca, Chairman



Example of Typical Deep Shale Fracturing Mixture Makeup

A representation showing the percent by volume composition of typical deep shale gas hydraulic fracture components (see graphic) reveals that over 99% of the fracturing mixture is comprised of freshwater and sand. This mixture is injected into deep shale gas formations and is typically confined by many thousands of feet of rock layers.

FRACTURING FLUID ADDITIVES, MAIN COMPOUNDS AND COMMON USES

Additive Type	Main Compound	Purpose	Common Use of Main Compound
Acid	Hydrochloric acid or muriatic acid	Helps dissolve minerals and initiate cracks in the rock	Swimming pool chemical and cleaner
Antibacterial Agent	Glutaraldehyde	Eliminates bacteria in the water that produce corrosive by-products	Disinfectant; Sterilizer for medical and dental equipment
Breaker	Ammonium persulfate	Allows a delayed break down of the gel	Used in haircoloring, as a disinfectant, and in manufacture of common household plastics
Corrosion inhibitor	n,n-dimethyl formamide	Prevents the corrosion of the pipe	Used in pharmaceuticals, acrylic fibers and plastics
Crosslinker	Borate salts	Maintains fluid viscosity as temperature increases	Used in laundry detergents, hand soaps and cosmetics
Friction reducer	Petroleum distillate	“Slicks” the water to minimize friction	Used in cosmetics including hair, make-up, nail and skin products
Gel	Guar gum or hydroxyethyl cellulose	Thickens the water in order to suspend the sand	Thickener used in cosmetics, baked goods, ice cream, toothpaste, sauces, and salad dressings
Iron control	Citric acid	Prevents precipitation of metal oxides	Food additive; food and beverages; lemon juice ~7% citric acid
Clay stabilizer	Potassium chloride	Creates a brine carrier fluid	Used in low-sodium table salt substitute, medicines and IV fluids
Oxygen scavenger	Ammonium bisulfite	Removes oxygen from the water to protect the pipe from corrosion	Used in cosmetics, food and beverage processing and water treatment
pH adjusting agent	Sodium or potassium carbonate	Maintains the effectiveness of other components, such as crosslinkers	Used in laundry detergents, soap, water softener and dish washer detergents
Proppant	Silica, quartz sand	Allows the fractures to remain open so the gas can escape	Drinking water filtration, play sand, concrete and brick mortar
Scale inhibitor	Ethylene glycol	Prevents scale deposits in the pipe	Used in household cleansers, de-icer, paints and caulk
Surfactant	Isopropanol	Used to increase the viscosity of the fracture fluid	Used in glass cleaner, multi-surface cleansers, antiperspirant, deodorants and hair color