

Eight Good Reasons for NZ Farmers to Lock the Gate

1. You may be subjected to unacceptable noise, light and traffic from vehicle movements, heavy machinery and burning flares around the clock, seven days a week.

The toxic fumes released from flares can be a real health hazard, yet there is very little research or monitoring conducted in NZ. Along with the loss of sleep and privacy, various stress-related health conditions may eventuate. Neighbours of a proposed wellsite expansion cited “noise and visual pollution, loss of property value, effect on family, flaring, disruption of general living, health and well being and sleep disturbance as reasons for their opposition.”

2. Your soil and water may become contaminated and permanently damaged by toxic chemicals.

Companies may hold resource consents allowing them to discharge drilling wastes (potentially containing toxic fracking chemicals) onto and into your land or into waterways, contaminating your soil and water. Some of these substances accumulate in the food chain. Whether you are a livestock producer or a crop grower, the quality of your product will be at risk. No industrial operations are fail safe. Accidents like spills, leaks and well blow-outs caused by human errors or malfunctioning of wells, pipes and equipment, can be catastrophic.

3. The health of your family and livestock may be at risk.

Typical discharges from gas wells include many substances that affect the respiratory, endocrine, nervous or immune systems. Many are carcinogenic. They contaminate air, soil, surface water and groundwater. One study showed that residents living ≤ 0.8 km from wells are at greater health risk than those further away (McKenzie et al, 2012). Another study strongly implicated wastewater exposure in the death, failure to breed, and reduced growth rate of cattle (Bamberger and Oswald, 2012). Notably, Taranaki’s cancer registration and mortality rates are significantly higher than the national average (Ministry of Health, 2012). There is anecdotal evidence of high cancer rates and birth defects in the Kapuni area.

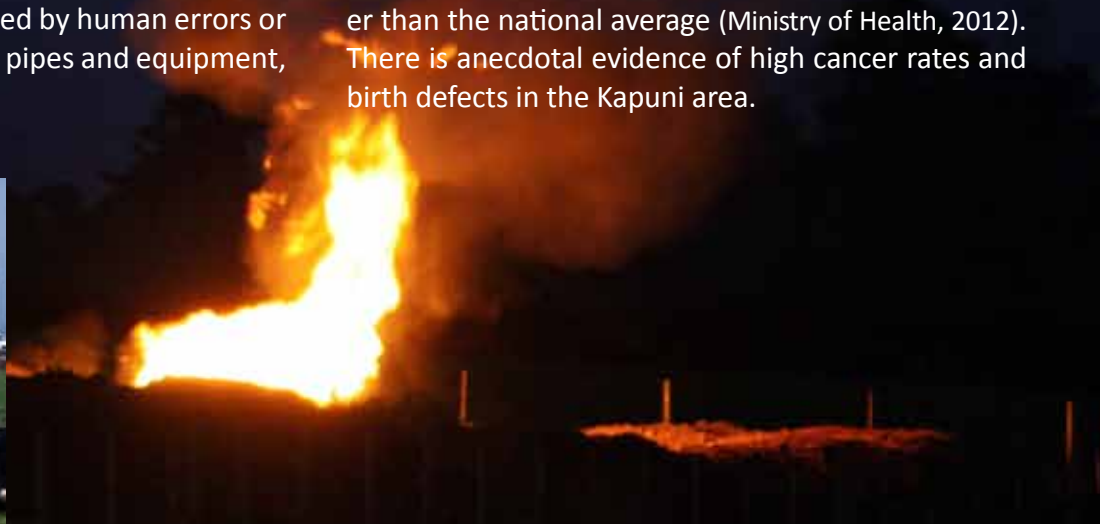


Photo (background): Flare at NZEC’s Copper Moki wellsite, Taranaki, June 2012.

Photo (far left): Todd Energy’s McKee and Mangahewa production station with cows grazing on the hillside, Taranaki, April 2012. The expansion of the station and associated wellsites has brought dangerous, truck traffic to narrow, rural roads.

Photo (left): Farm next to Tag Oil’s Cheal A production station, Taranaki, June 2012.

4. Your groundwater supply may be adversely affected.

Fracking for oil and gas requires large amount of water (4-15 million L per frack job), taken from groundwater and streams. Aquifers adjacent to coal seams, and shallower, alluvial groundwater connected to coal seams may be drawn down as the coal seam is depressurized to allow the gas to flow. Abstractions for the rapidly expanding oil, gas and coal seam gas industry will compete with existing and rising agricultural and household needs.

5. Your property value may fall.

Very few buyers are interested in properties in, or near to, a gas field. Initial compensation agreements may seem fair and reasonable but watch out for the fine print. Any agreement you sign could bind all future owners of the property. Some banks may even refuse business loans to owners of properties near gas wells. Farm insurance may also become difficult to secure.

6. You may lose control of your day-to-day property management.

Some of your land will be taken out of production. Each gas well requires a piece of cleared land, access road, pipes and often a compressor, waste storage pits and other infrastructure on your farm. You will have little or no say on exactly what or where they are placed. Precision cropping and controlled traffic farming systems cannot co-exist with the oil, gas and coal seam gas industry.

7. Your community and social wellbeing may change forever.

The experience of most landholders who have dealt with oil and gas companies operating on their land has been overwhelmingly negative and frustrating. Companies in general show little respect for families and communities. They thrive on dividing communities and take advantage of those who are most vulnerable. Remember your consent for companies to drill or dispose of wastes on your land may affect your neighbours too.

8. You may regret not to have supported the transition to clean, sustainable energy.

Oil, gas and coal seam gas are finite resources nearing the end. Clean energy technologies will provide economic opportunities and ensure future energy supplies. There is overwhelming evidence that global climate change caused by increasing greenhouse gases from fossil fuels and deforestation is threatening societies. Extreme weather events like droughts, heat waves, floods, wildfires and severe storms are early warning signs of more devastation to come, some will be irreversible. "The longer we wait to tackle climate change, the harder and more expensive the task will be" (AAAS, 2006). The time to act is now. We owe this to future generations.

We strongly suggest you:

Don't negotiate with oil and gas companies.

Don't sign anything.

Seek Legal Advice.

Lock The Gate!

www.lockthegate.org.nz



House and land for sale near Tag Oil Sidewinder Production Station, Taranaki, June 2012.



Unlined pit for synthetic based drilling mud at BTW Brown Road landfarm, Taranaki, TRC doc 987702, 2012.



Background: Aerial photo of the vast Jonah gas field in Wyoming by Bruce Gordon, SkyTruth, May 2006.



Protestors in Sydney by Janie Barrett, Aug 2011.