Dangerous and Close
Fracking Puts the Nation’s Most Vulnerable People at Risk

Oil and gas companies are fracking near our communities, polluting our air and water, and risking the health of our children and other vulnerable populations. Wells have been fracked close to thousands of day cares, schools, nursing homes and hospitals.

Fracking Is Dangerous…
Fracking creates a range of threats to public health and safety. Explosions, fires and other incidents at well sites can present an immediate safety threat to people nearby. Fracking produces health-threatening air pollution, including chemicals that can cause cancer or lead to the formation of smog, which triggers asthma attacks and has been linked to increases in school absences, hospitals visits and premature death.

…and Close to Vulnerable People
Drilling companies are fracking for oil and gas in close proximity to many vulnerable Americans.

- There are 1,957 child care facilities, 1,376 schools, 236 nursing care providers and 103 hospitals within one mile of a fracked well in Arkansas, California, Colorado, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and West Virginia.
- More than 650,000 kindergarten through twelfth grade children attend school within one mile of a fracked well.
- The highest percentage of children attending school close to a fracked well is in West Virginia, where 8 percent of children spend their school days within one mile of a fracked well.
Health Impacts on Vulnerable People

Children, the elderly and the sick are particularly vulnerable to the health risks created by fracking.

• Children’s developing respiratory, immune and nervous systems are more susceptible to damage from toxic chemicals. In addition, children tend to breathe more rapidly than adults and are also more likely to play outdoors, increasing their exposure to air pollution from fracking.

• Older adults and the sick have weaker immune systems and more difficulty breaking down toxins in the body. In addition, people with pre-existing cardiovascular disease are more likely to suffer a heart attack or a stroke after exposure to elevated levels of soot pollution, such as that from diesel trucks or a drilling rig.

• Fracking can exacerbate existing disease. For example, researchers have found that Pennsylvanians with asthma who live near fracked oil and gas wells had more asthma flare-ups that required medical care than did patients who lived farther away.

Protect Vulnerable Populations from Fracking

Given the scale and severity of fracking’s impacts, banning fracking is the prudent and necessary course to protect public health and the environment.

• Existing fracked oil and gas wells should be closed, beginning with those that are closest to vulnerable populations. As documented in this report, tens of thousands of our most vulnerable residents live, play, receive health services or study very close to fracked wells. Closing those wells would help protect public health.

• The federal government should close loopholes that exempt the fracking industry from key elements of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act.

• At the same time, all levels of government should act to accelerate our transition to 100 percent renewable energy, including investments in energy efficiency and increasing development of clean, renewable energy sources.

For more information and the full report, please visit www.EnvironmentAmerica.org