



Fracking: hell or a good idea?

by Joanne Green

Access the World Wide Web and international news releases talk to us about Fracking, some fore and majority against. The basis for against is due to past incidents such as *Sacett versus EPA* in which boundary rights were exceeded, and *Strudley versus Antero Resources Corporation, 2011* whereby allegations were made for water contamination. This wave of Fracking rejection has been repeated throughout 2012 within capital cities and tabloids alike.

Opposition coalitions have formed in Friends of the Earth, the Green Party and other anti-Fracking protest groups. Though the groups protesting do contain realistic concerns I question whether their protests are nothing more than propaganda? This is because I have not read any Environmental Statement reports within any of the news releases, yet Environmental Impact Statements are necessary to meet statutory legislation for changes to landscapes and they involve consultations too.

Environmental Statements (ES) evidence and justify design processes, types of mitigation, guidance and legislation. ES contributors include professionals, members of professional bodies, experts who undertake personal professional development and who stake their reputation and livelihood upon accident prevention. Those judicially found not to have are fined such as British Petroleum \$4.5bn regardless of where the accident occurs. It is a myriad of reasons an ES must take place and be noted, as they aid accident prevention and regulation adherence in addition to the wishes of local people.

In addition to ES, are protestors fully aware that energy creation is heavily regulated and is enforced and in many legal areas. The concerns of the protestors appear to fall within two legal areas, Health & Safety and Environmental. The protestors appear to have no concerns with employee health and safety therefore one can only assume it is the wider geographical impacts the coalitions are concerned with, how wide, to Yorkshire, to the Midlands, or elsewhere?

Regarding demographics, the laws in England are united unlike in the USA where laws are different state to state. The consistency results in legal ambiguity for hydrology investigations and works whether they occur in Greater Manchester, in Birmingham or elsewhere.

Therefore before abandoning Fracking, perhaps Greater Manchester, once all of the investigations are in, ought to have a vote publicised within our very Manchester Evening News and Metro of the journey as part of the consultation process on whether Fracking should or should not occur in our city and alternatives to it.

Read this background article by Joanne by clicking on [Fracking](#)

This ongoing subject is being revisited by the Manchester Salon in March with a public discussion on the issue of **fracking** - click on [Fracking: a technological innovation too far?](#) to see more details.