

EARTHWORKS JOURNAL



“

Now we can really show people the pollution”

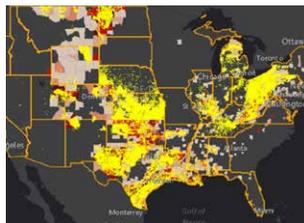
Priscilla Villa, Earthworks Texas Organizer



EARTHWORKS™



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- Can we prevent another mine waste disaster?
- State regulators fail citizens
- No Dirty Gold!

➔ **#CutMethane**



EARTHWORKS™

Earthworks is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting communities and the environment from the adverse impacts of mineral and energy development while promoting sustainable solutions.

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EARTHWORKS
JOURNAL

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ON THE COVER

Earthworks' newest organizer with our infrared camera that makes otherwise invisible air pollution from oil and gas visible. Meet her on page 5.

Small cover photos: Bottom photos L-R by: iStock, Barbara Ullian, oilandgasthreatmap.com

Fighting climate change

Carrying out Earthworks' mission has changed significantly since we were founded 25+ years ago, and even since I became president in 2010.

The primary reason for that change? Climate change. As the Earth's average temperature has warmed over the past few decades, we've become increasingly aware that the negative impacts of oil and gas development don't just affect local communities, they affect our global community.



Now, we are pointing an infrared camera and showing the world pictures, videos and maps of the methane pollution from oil and gas."

While Earthworks still fights dirty extractive industries in backyards and on playgrounds—helping residents hold companies accountable and pressuring regulators to do their jobs and protect the public interest ahead of private profits—we are also using new approaches. We've always known where oil and gas pollution was because we know where neighbors are suffering from health problems. Now, we are pointing an infrared camera and showing the world pictures, videos and maps of the methane pollution from oil and gas.

And last year, we joined the Keep It In the Ground campaign to call on the Obama administration to stop leasing fossil fuels from public lands for the purpose of extracting fossil fuels. The best science tells us that the only way to prevent catastrophic climate change is to stop burning

fossil fuels. As long as the US keeps pumping out oil and gas, our global community will be at risk—whether from drought, storms, or sea level rise.

So whether it's fighting to ban fracking and cut methane pollution in communities from California to Pennsylvania, or mapping the national crisis of health and climate threats from oil and gas, Earthworks is fighting to protect people and empower communities with clear, hard evidence.

In solidarity,

Jennifer Krill, Executive Director



Earthworks' Community Empowerment Project (CEP), formally known as the Citizens Empowerment Project, in action: exposing air pollution from oil and gas across the country and helping communities fight back.

One year later: Can we prevent another mine waste disaster?



The comment period for new federal Superfund rules opens December 1. Visit earthworkSACTION.org/action to send your comments.

Photo by Jerry McBride for The Chicago Herald

By Aaron Mintzes

In the year since the Gold King Mine disaster flooded Colorado's Animas River with an orange toxic mess, policymakers eagerly sought ways to prevent similar catastrophes. When disaster struck, Earthworks was ready to guide meaningful change by reforming the General Mining Law of 1872.

When disaster struck, Earthworks was ready to guide meaningful change by reforming the General Mining Law of 1872.

The 1872 Mining Law is a pick and shovel era statute designed to settle the West. For the first time since 2009, the Senate introduced an 1872 reform bill sponsored by Senators Udall, Bennet, Heinrich, Markey, and Wyden. However, the Senate majority has not allowed a vote.

Another bill encouraging voluntary clean up of old or abandoned mines like Gold King, has slightly better prospects. The Good Samaritan Cleanup and Orphaned Mines Act of 2016 enjoys bipartisan sponsorship from Colorado Senators Bennet and Gardner. Earthworks Execu-

tive Director Jennifer Krill testified before the Senate's Environment and Public Works Committee about needed improvements that would effectively address our abandoned mines problem.

But not every Congress moves us forward

The House of Representatives has introduced a trio of terrible bills that promote mining claim fraud and effectively create an adopt-a-highway type approach to abandoned mine clean up. In reality, nothing short of an independent dedicated polluters-pay funding source will even put a dent in the \$50 billion legacy left by nearly half a million abandoned mines nationwide.

In addition, Earthworks and our partners continue to fend off anti-environmental riders on agency spending bills. This year, Congress seeks to stop agencies from preventing toxic mine waste dumping in to our streams, forbidding the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from clarifying which waters are

protected, or even writing rules to save taxpayers money when a mining company goes bankrupt.

Earthworks sues the EPA to demand action

In spite of this, and thanks to Earthworks' lawsuit demanding agency action, EPA is now drafting new Superfund rules that will require mines to provide better financial assurances to cover clean up costs. While it's too late for Gold King, new rules could help prevent the financial chaos that comes with future mine waste disasters. Because without addressing the underlying problem of 1872 Mining Law reform, these types of disasters will continue to happen.



New report: find out how the EPA can ensure mining companies, not taxpayers, pay for mine cleanup. earthworkSACTION.org/makepolluterspay

Citizens can't wait

THE MOUNTING FAILURE OF STATES AS REGULATORS



By Bruce Baizel

Earlier this year, the state of Pennsylvania blatantly eliminated new regulations for conventional oil and gas operations at the behest of industry – ignoring years of public process to develop those regulations. Texas regulators ignored the USGS’ (US Geological Survey) study documenting the connection between drilling-related saltwater injection wells and earthquakes in north Texas. In my home state of Colorado – in response to a ballot initiative – the industry, the governor and the oil and gas commission were far more concerned about royalties and being able to drill in backyards than about the negative health impacts to the people living next to those wells.

Citizens look for other options for protection

These examples show why citizens increasingly are looking to other options for protecting their health, water and property. In early June, voters in Butte County joined three other counties and two cities in California in banning fracking. Around the same time, in Pinellas County, Florida, commissioners unanimously voted to ban fracking as well. And in Colorado that same week, the governor was reduced to playing the piano, rather than speaking at an event to tout his biography, by protestors holding him “in contempt” for undermining democracy through his minions’ lawsuit that overturned the Longmont vote to ban fracking.

As the science accumulates – showing that drilling for, and using, oil and gas significantly adds to global warming, damages water and makes those living nearby sick – the refusal of state governments to say ‘no’ to the industry simply forces citizens to take alternative paths to protect themselves. They will take the matter out of state agencies’ hands – by ballot or legal challenge or national standard, where their democratically-expressed will is blocked by all three branches of government, they will engage in non-violent protest and disruption of the activities that cause the harm.

At that point, states and the industry will have no one to blame but themselves.

Just tell me the truth

Understanding Fracking-Related Health Risks and Community Perspectives – Karnes County, Texas

By Priscilla Villa

I’m excited to join Earthworks after recently completing my Master’s thesis research on perceived health risks from fracking in south Texas. In conjunction with air monitoring, I conducted interviews with impacted community members to:

- understand the health impacts related to air quality in Karnes County;
- understand the attitudes and perspectives of residents towards the impacts of industry on air quality;
- and learn how the residents wanted to improve air quality.

Listening to impacted residents and researching health impacts in Texas’ Eagle Ford Shale was the perfect introduction to the work I will be doing at Earthworks, and will inform my goals as an organizer for the next year.

Almost everyone I spoke with was very concerned for their health and believed fracking, and the poor air quality it produces, is to blame. One of the important and immediate needs I identified is education. Residents know very little about fracking, how it impacts the environment and the known health risks. Residents were also unaware that they can report their concerns to state agencies. Here, I can help. Earthworks can help change the status quo in Texas by educating residents on the risks of living near oil and gas facilities and help them understand how and where to report their concerns. I’m looking forward to creating a consistent platform for residents to ask questions and voice their concerns that allows them to use their experiences to empower themselves and their community.





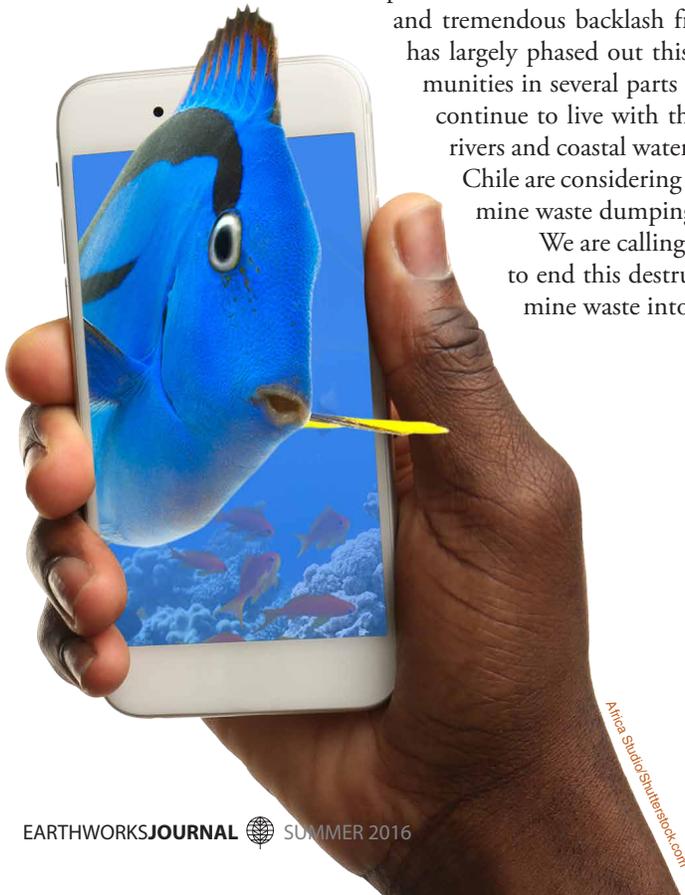
Toxic mine waste threatens the world's oceans

By Shreema Mehta and Payal Sampat

Producing just one gold ring generates 20 tons of mine waste. So where does all this waste go? Much of the waste generated from mining comes during the extraction process, when the desired mineral is chemically separated from ore. Mining companies typically store this chemical laden sludge, known as tailings, in massive dams or impoundments.

But in some places, mining companies are directly dumping this mine waste into rivers, lakes and oceans. In fact, mining companies are dumping more than 180 million tons of hazardous mine waste each year into the world's waterways, threatening vital bodies of water with toxic heavy metals and other chemicals poisonous to humans and wildlife. In response to devastating impacts and tremendous backlash from communities, the mining industry has largely phased out this high-risk, low-cost practice. But communities in several parts of the world, notably in Southeast Asia, continue to live with the impacts of mine waste dumping into rivers and coastal waters. Incredibly, countries like Norway and Chile are considering opening up their fjords and fisheries into mine waste dumping grounds.

We are calling on mining companies and governments to end this destructive practice, and end the dumping of mine waste into oceans, rivers and streams.



1.3 million shipping containers per year

The amount of tailings dumped into rivers, lakes and oceans.





7 HOT SPOTS FOR TAILINGS DUMPING



WHO DUMPS WASTE INTO NATURAL WATER BODIES?

Barrick Gold (Canada)
BHP Billiton (Australia/UK)
Freeport-McMoRan Copper and Gold (USA)
Goldcorp (Canada)
Newcrest Mining (Australia)
Newmont Mining (USA)
Rio Tinto (UK/Australia)
Teck (Canada)
Vale (Brazil)
Highlands Pacific (Australia)
PanAust (Australia)



The top four mines that dump tailings into bodies of water account for 86% of the tailings dumped into bodies of water each year:

1. Freeport McMoRan and Rio Tinto's Grasberg mine in West Papua, Indonesia
2. Newmont Sumitomo Mining's Batu Hijau mine in Indonesia
3. Ok Tedi Mining Ltd.'s mine in Papua New Guinea
4. Cliff's Mining Company's Wabush/Scully mine in Labrador, Canada

You can't find **DORY**

If her home is buried in toxic mining waste.

STOP OCEAN MINE WASTE DUMPING!

This past June, Pixar released the animated movie *Finding Dory*. The movie's star, the spunky Dory is a blue tang, a royal blue tropical fish that lives in the Indo-Pacific Ocean – one of the remaining dumping sites for mine waste. Before the movie was released, we launched a mini-campaign to highlight the impacts the mining industry has on Dory's home.



Stop mine waste dumping!
earthworksaction.org/dory

When we #CutMethane

WE PROTECT OUR HEALTH AND CLIMATE

By Lauren Pagel

This spring, the Obama administration finalized the first national standard to cut methane pollution from new and modified sources of oil and gas production. The rule will also cut associated pollution emitted with methane: volatile organic compounds like benzene, a carcinogen. While the EPA's new national standard to cut methane pollution from oil and gas facilities is not a substitute for replacing fossil fuels as quickly as possible with truly clean energy alternatives like renewables and conservation, it is a step in the right direction. Reducing methane pollution from fracked oil and gas can help protect our climate and the health of nearby communities.

Even more important than rules for new and modified oil and gas facilities, is

the Obama administration's recent announcement that they will begin the process to cut pollution at the over 1 million existing oil and gas operations. While much of this work will fall to the next administration, a strong standard for existing oil and gas facilities is the only way that communities currently being harmed by this pollution can finally get some relief.

No matter how stringent our methane pollution controls, burning fossil fuels pollutes the climate. Earthworks has two infrared cameras that make normally invisible pollution visible. We have documented more than 200 releases across the United States in the past year alone. This pollution can only truly be stopped by a quick and just transition to clean energy.



Photo: Sierra Club



Oil & Gas Threat Map

See the pollution in your backyard

oilandgasthreatmap.com

By Molly Dunton

Since late 2014, Earthworks has been traveling the country exposing otherwise invisible air pollution from oil and gas using our infrared camera. We've done this to help inform communities about the pollution right in their backyards, and empower people to take action. With our partners, Earthworks recently released The Oil & Gas Threat Map, an interactive tool to show you the pollution we have documented, and just how close you are to a source. The map combines video testimonials from impacted community members, infrared videos of pollution, population and community data with a comprehensive map of oil and gas wells.

Type in your address to see the air pollution in your community, and better understand the public health risks posed by the oil and gas industry:

oilandgasthreatmap.com



Milestone! PROTECTING THE KALMIOPSIS WILD RIVERS

Lasting protection is in the works!

GOOD NEWS



By Bonnie Gestring

The Kalmiopsis region of southwest Oregon is wild, rugged, country – packed with some of the nation’s most beautiful rivers and streams, prolific salmon and steelhead runs, and home to some of the rarest plants in North America.

It’s here that the Wild and Scenic Smith River and Illinois Rivers get their start and make their way to the Pacific Ocean. And, this is where proposals to strip mine for nickel have triggered a broad public outcry to protect the unique public lands that set this place apart from all others. Despite broad opposition, the Forest Service says their hands are tied by the archaic 1872 Mining Law, which prioritizes mining over all other land uses.

In response, key members of the Oregon and California congressional delegation took action. They asked the Interior Department to temporarily withdraw 100,000 acres of federal lands from mining, while they push for congress to consider more

lasting protection in the Southwestern Oregon Watershed and Salmon Protection Act of 2015 (S. 346 and H.R. 682).

In February 2015, the Interior Department got the ball rolling, initiating the mineral withdrawal process. In April 2016, the agencies released their environmental review of the proposed mineral withdrawal for public comment.

Earthworks has been working with our allies in the region to demonstrate broad support for the withdrawal. In July 2016 the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management officially recommended that the area be withdrawn. Now the decision goes off to DC for circulation within the Department of the Interior, and finally sign-off from Secretary Jewell.

A huge thank you to everyone who commented! Together, you helped generate over 10,000 petition signatures in support of protecting this special wild habitat.

Wilderness is under attack

By Bonnie Gestring

“Wilderness is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.”

With those words, the Wilderness Act was passed in 1964, including the creation of the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness in Montana – one of the first ten wild places to be set aside for protection by Congress. The Cabinet Mountains is one of the few places remaining in the lower 48 states that provide refuge to threatened populations

of grizzly bears and bull trout.

Sadly, this small refuge is under siege by mining companies trying to mine the copper buried underneath by tunneling under the Wilderness. To keep the underground tunnels dry, the mining company intends to lower the groundwater table, diverting water from the Wilderness rivers and streams that rely on it. The Environmental Impact Statement predicts that the mine will dry up an estimated 26 miles of rivers and streams for 1,200-1,300 years, essentially forever.

Earthworks has pulled out all the stops

You can follow our progress and learn about more ways to help, earthworksaaction.org/montanore

TAKE ACTION



to protect the Wilderness, and the ecosystem it protected. We hired fisheries biologists, hydrologists and other technical experts. We submitted extensive comments. You submitted thousands of comments. But the Forest Service approved the mine anyway.

This spring, we partnered with our allies to file a series of strategic lawsuits against the Forest Service’s decision to approve the mine based on the lasting harm it will have on wilderness, water and wildlife. We will not give up.

NO DIRTY GOLD WEDDING RINGS, AND 16-YEAR OLD'S CONSCIENCE

By Paul Jolly

A few weeks ago, I asked Charlah Robinson, a new Defender's Circle donor, what motivated her giving to Earthworks. She wrote back, "My son Alex caused me to donate to offset the cost of our wedding rings (I had not thought to be sure the gold was conflict free)".

I was intrigued, so I asked if she would be willing to explain. A week later I was talking to Charlah and her 16-year-old son Alex.

Alex explained, "We went to a documentary film festival, and saw a film called *When Elephants Fight*, about the violence caused by big corporations exploiting mineral wealth in the Congo. Right after that, Mom went to get rings for her wedding. I asked if the gold was conflict-free, and she said she didn't know."

"He kept asking," Charlah continued. "That's why we have kids, isn't it? I didn't want anything terrible hanging over the wedding. I learned about Earthworks' No Dirty Gold campaign, and decided to make a gift, as an atonement."

“

My son Alex caused me to donate to offset the cost of our wedding rings."

– Charlah Robinson, Defender's Circle Donor



We will continue to work to ensure that all gold is mined in ways that respect human rights in the Congo and around the world. In the meantime, we are grateful to Charlah and Alex; your story embodies the purpose of the No Dirty Gold campaign, to inspire and empower consumers to make purchases they can feel good about.



Alex (left), Charlah Robinson and her husband Scott Puza.

Máxima Acuña de Chaupe wins 2016 Goldman Environmental Prize!

By Payal Sampat

Peruvian subsistence farmer Máxima Acuña de Chaupe was awarded the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize in April for her ongoing fight to protect her home and community from Newmont Mining's proposed Conga gold mine. The project threatens livelihoods, water and mountain lakes in the arid Andean highlands, and has drawn significant opposition from the local community. Máxima and the community have refused to back down despite intimidation and legal threats from Newmont's subsidiary, Minera Yanacocha, and its hired security forces.



Máxima Acuña de Chaupe with Mining Program Director Payal Sampat at a reception hosted by Earthworks at the Women's Building in San Francisco, April 2016.

Earthworks has monitored the Conga proposal since its earliest days, and has stood with Máxima and frontline communities in Cajamarca. We have repeatedly called on Newmont to respect the community's demands. Earthworks nominated Máxima for the Goldman Prize, which is the world's largest award for grassroots environmental activists. Join us in celebrating this momentous win for Peru – and for people around the world fighting to protect their communities from irresponsible mining.

If you wish to contribute to Máxima's legal fund, you may do so here:
earthworksaction.org/donate/maxima



Why we need infrared technology to expose fracking pollution



By Pete Dronkers

Last December I travelled with Earthworks' Community Empowerment Project on one of its most high profile ventures yet: two trips to document the enormous Aliso Canyon gas leak outside of Los Angeles with our infrared camera. An underground natural gas storage facility was spewing 100,000/lbs of gas/hour, polluting our air with the potent greenhouse gas methane, and harming the local community

On my first trip, we hiked a mountain and cruised the quiet Porter Ranch neighborhoods to capture breathtaking footage of pollution spanning the canyon and billowing into town, giving people the first view of this otherwise invisible pollution. Finally, no guessing was left to be done regarding the severity of the problem.

Two weeks later we partnered with the Environmental Defense Fund to rent a small airplane for a better view from around and just above the site. The results were devastating. A plume of mostly methane rose over 1,000 feet high and hung ominously over one of the most populated areas of the country.

When EDF posted the video I captured to YouTube, it went viral. Together, our videos and images have almost 1.5 million views, appeared on national TV and papers from the *Los Angeles Times* to *The New York Times*, and everywhere in between.

Newsweek summed up the importance of infrared videos in telling the horrific story of the Porter Ranch disaster:

"... Porter Ranch was turning out to be a disaster without an audience.

That started to change on December 9, when activists from the environmental groups Earthworks and Food & Water Watch released a video of the leak taken with an infrared camera capable of capturing invisible gasses... You realize at once, and without any doubt, that a very bad thing is happening in Porter Ranch."

We knew the power of our infrared camera, but after Aliso Canyon, millions of people now understand its power too. It did not just document a historical event like Porter Ranch, but brought awareness to the broader problem of methane emissions in the context of climate change.



... Porter Ranch was turning out to be a disaster without an audience.

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– *Newsweek* magazine, January 7, 2016



Earthworks' certified thermographer Pete Dronkers films the Aliso Canyon methane disaster from a nearby hiking trail.



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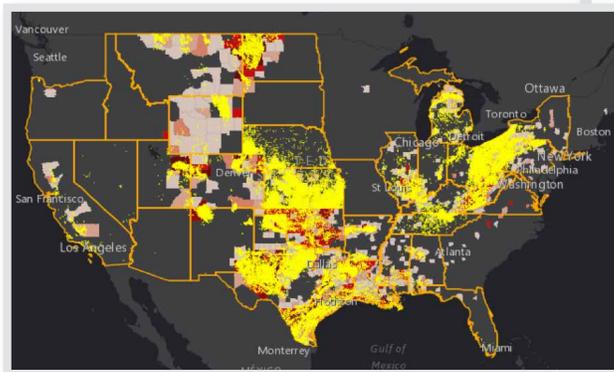
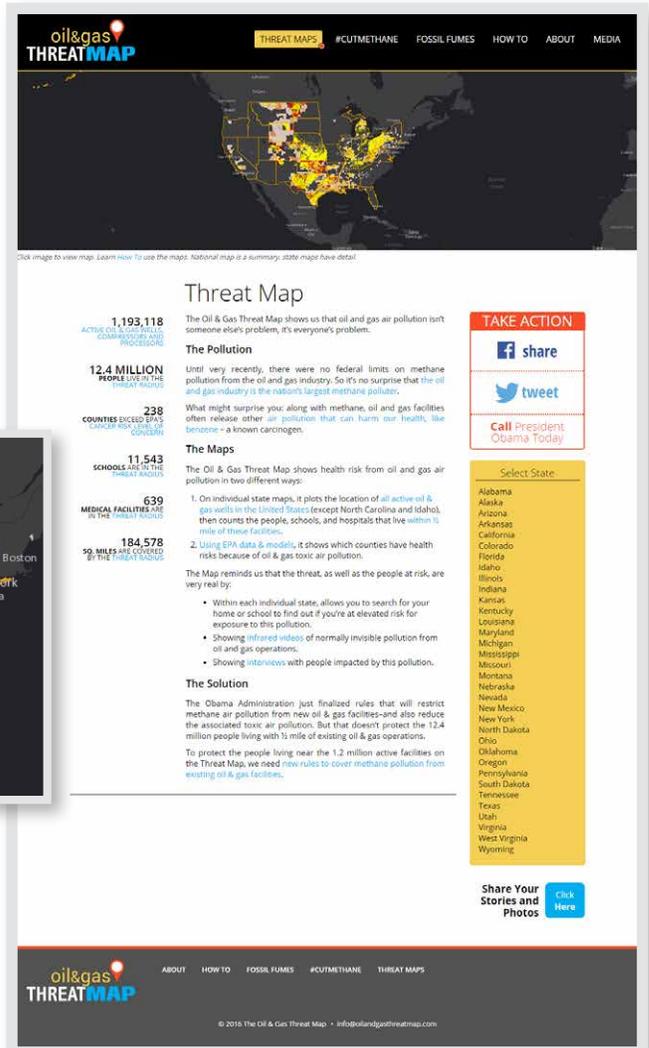
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Earthworks, FracTracker and the Clean Air Task Force recently released the interactive Oil and Gas Threat Map that details just how harmful oil and gas air pollution is to millions of Americans. Learn more on page 8.



oilandgasthreatmap.com

oil&gas THREATMAP

THREAT MAPS #CUTMETHANE FOSSIL FUMES HOW TO ABOUT MEDIA

Click image to view map. Learn how to use the maps. National map is a summary. State maps have detail.

Threat Map

The Oil & Gas Threat Map shows us that oil and gas air pollution isn't someone else's problem, it's everyone's problem.

1,193,118 ACTIVE OIL & GAS WELLS (COMBUSTION AND PRODUCTION)

12.4 MILLION PEOPLE LIVE IN THE THREAT ZONE

238 COUNTIES EXCEED EPA'S CANCER RISK LEVEL OF CONCERN

11,543 SCHOOLS ARE IN THE THREAT ZONE

639 MEDICAL FACILITIES ARE IN THE THREAT ZONE

184,578 SQ. MILES ARE COVERED BY THE THREAT ZONE

The Pollution

Until very recently, there were no federal limits on methane pollution from the oil and gas industry. So it's no surprise that the oil and gas industry is the nation's largest methane polluter.

What might surprise you: along with methane, oil and gas facilities often release other air pollutants that can harm our health, like benzene - a known carcinogen.

The Maps

The Oil & Gas Threat Map shows health risk from oil and gas pollution in two different ways:

- On individual state maps, it plots the location of all active oil & gas wells in the United States (except North Carolina and Idaho), then counts the people, schools, and hospitals that live within 1/2 mile of these facilities.
- Using EPA data & models, it shows which counties have health risks because of oil & gas toxic air pollution.

The Map reminds us that the threat, as well as the people at risk, are very real by:

- Within each individual state, allows you to search for your home or school to find out if you're at elevated risk for exposure to this pollution.
- Showing infrared videos of normally invisible pollution from oil and gas operations.
- Showing interviews with people impacted by this pollution.

The Solution

The Obama Administration just finalized rules that will restrict methane air pollution from new oil & gas facilities-and also reduce the associated toxic air pollution. But that doesn't protect the 12.4 million people living with 1/2 mile of existing oil & gas operations.

To protect the people living near the 1.2 million active facilities on the Threat Map, we need new rules to cover methane pollution from existing oil & gas facilities.

TAKE ACTION

share

tweet

Call President Obama Today

Select State:

- Alabama
- Alaska
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Florida
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Michigan
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Virginia
- West Virginia
- Wyoming

Share Your Stories and Photos [Click Here](#)

oil&gas THREATMAP

ABOUT HOW TO FOSSIL FUMES #CUTMETHANE THREAT MAPS

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