



DISCLAIMER:

*The City does not lease nor provide advice about leasing **private** property for gas exploration and drilling. Information provided by the City addresses general issues related to gas drilling and mineral leases and is not intended to provide advice on any specific legal matter or factual situation. This information is not intended to create and its receipt does not constitute or create an attorney-client, fiduciary or other relationship. Readers should not act upon this information without seeking professional legal counsel. Gas companies offering leases for gas exploration and drilling for privately owned minerals, including those with the word "Dallas" as part of their name or logo, are not associated with or endorsed by the City of Dallas.*

What is the Barnett Shale?

The Barnett Shale is a large natural gas reserve that stretches underground across an 18 county area and is located approximately 1.5 miles below the surface. Some experts say that the Barnett Shale is the largest onshore natural gas field in the United States. The field name for the productive portion of the Barnett Shale formation has been designated as the Newark, East Field by the Texas Railroad Commission. According to the Commission, the field produced 12% of the natural gas in Texas in 2006. In recent years, advances in drilling technology have made it possible for energy companies to extract large amounts of natural gas from the Barnett Shale.

Does the drilling harm the environment?

Drilling for natural gas is more environmentally friendly than drilling for oil. Drilling and extracting natural gas is cleaner. With the advent of directional and horizontal drilling technology, natural gas wells have a much smaller impact on land than oil wells and new drilling techniques are more energy efficient and quieter.

Can someone else own the minerals underneath my property? How can I tell if I own my minerals?

Yes—it is possible that the mineral ownership may be different than surface ownership. A deed/title search may be necessary for one to determine who actually owns the minerals under a piece of property.

How far must a well be from my property or public structures/areas?

The distance requirement is regulated by the city's gas ordinance. No well may be drilled closer than 300 feet from any protected use such as a residence, religious institution, public building, hospital, school or public park. Each drill site and distance is reviewed and may be extended by the City Plan Commission or the Dallas City Council.

Will drilling affect the foundation of my house?

There is no documented evidence of drilling affecting foundations. Most foundation problems occurring in the North Texas area are a result of ground swell and contraction during alternating periods of wet and dry weather.

What emergency plans are in place in case of an accident?

In the case of gas wells, it has been determined that one plan is not a viable alternative and that if a situation should arise, it should be handled based on the type of incident and the information available.

Does the city profit when drilling takes place on private property?

No—the City only profits from natural gas drilling on city-owned property. Only the mineral owner and the mineral lessee profit from the operations. The City does receive ad valorem taxes, which are assessed and collected by the Dallas County Appraisal District.

Can a gas well be placed on my property without my permission?

As a general rule, an operator would rather have the surface owner's permission before putting a well site on a particular property and will pay appropriate damage fees to the surface owners. Any other actions would be preceded by legal action involving the operator and the property owner.

Is the City monitoring our water supply due to water usage by the drillers?

The City of Dallas Water Department monitors *all* usage of water in the City.

Who can I call if I have a question or a complaint?

Questions regarding drilling and operation of gas wells may be directed to the Building Inspection Section at (214) 948-4480.

Will someone be on the drilling site at all times?

During drilling operations there are personnel on-site 24 hours. Completion operations are usually conducted during the day, but personnel may be on-site 24 hours during a short flow-back period. If there are not personnel on-site (Operations or Private Security), then the site/equipment must be secured.

Will the drilling be 24 hours a day? How long is the drilling rig in place?

The drilling operation is only about a month per well. A well in the Barnett Shale typically takes 20 to 30 days to drill. However, depending on the area, multiple wells may be drilled consecutively on one site. When drilling is completed, the drilling rig is removed and a smaller completion rig is put into place. After the completion rig is finished, frac trucks arrive for the fracturing process which takes an additional 4 to 5 days. Finally, a wellhead (or "Christmas tree") is installed along with a few storage tanks. A Barnett Shale well is expected to produce for 20 to 30 years or more.

How loud may the drilling be and who regulates it?

Noise is regulated by the City's ordinance and states that "drilling may not produce a sound level greater than 78 dB(a)" and "fracturing may not produce a sound level greater than 85 dB(a) or five dB(a) above background noise, which ever is greater." SEC. 51A-12.107(i)

How many trucks will be needed to take the salt water and condensate away from the sites, since injection wells cannot be used to avoid contamination of ground water?

The majority of the truck traffic occurs during the initial drilling process (20-30 days). During this time, 5,000 barrels per day are generated and each truck can carry 120 barrels per truck. After the fracing process is complete, usually 10-100 barrels per day of formation water are generated.

What is the weight of the trucks unloaded and what is the weight loaded of the trucks that will be using the area roads?

The width, length, height and weight of the trucks are regulated by TxDOT and will be approximately 20-30,000 lbs. unloaded to 60-70,000 lbs. when loaded. The City of Dallas ordinance also requires a road plan regarding truck traffic and calls for the operator to repair all roads impacted by the trucks back to their original condition. XTO Energy conducted an analysis of the amount of trucks it takes to build a single family home as compared to operating a gas well. The company concluded that it takes approximately the same amount of trucks to build four 2,500 sq. ft. homes as it does for the entire drilling operation from start to completion of a gas well.