

## What can you do? Doing nothing is not an option.

*In a very short time, hundreds of gas wells could share space with our farms, homes, forests, and waterways.*

**Educate yourself.** There are many web-sites, educational materials, and organizations that offer information on this important topic. Seek balanced information and learn to separate fact from opinion.

**Attend an information session.** The Cornell Cooperative Extension, Farm Bureau, SWCD [www.cortlandswcd.org](http://www.cortlandswcd.org), GDACC, and other organizations offer seminars & resources on gas drilling.

**Organize or join a coalition.** Landowners in other counties have formed coalitions to negotiate gas leases that are more fair and less risky.

**Join a group.** Groups such as GDACC and Shaleshock [www.shaleshock.org](http://www.shaleshock.org) have organized to seek & provide accurate information to the public.

**Make your opinion heard.** Contact town, city, county, state, and federal officials. Many lawmakers are on the fence right now so let them know that this issue is important to you.

*A majority of land in Cortland County is currently leased and new leases are being signed everyday.*



*Land has been leased directly above our sole source aquifer.  
Gas drilling will affect us all.*



*A lease is a legally binding document.  
Consult an experienced attorney.*

**GDACC Gas Drilling Awareness of Cortland County**

[www.gdacc.wordpress.com](http://www.gdacc.wordpress.com)  
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## Natural Gas Leasing?

## A Dozen Dirty Secrets That The Landman Won't Tell You

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# What the Landman won't tell you...

*Signed a lease? On the fence? Interested in learning more about natural gas drilling?*

## Points to consider:

### **1. What do you want to do with your land?**

This should be your first consideration. Gas drilling can change your land in unanticipated and permanent ways. How will gas leasing fit in with your vision?

**2. Leasing.** Choosing to lease your land will have far-ranging consequences. Despite what the landman will tell you, there is no such thing as a standard lease. There is a wide range in the amount of money landowners have negotiated with gas companies from sign-on bonuses to royalties. *The money can look good until you consider the hidden & future costs.* It is vitally important to consult an experienced attorney and negotiate *not just price*, but also environmental impacts on your land.

**3. Duration of Lease.** The length of the lease is arbitrary. Once the gas company drills or installs any infrastructure on your property, they can *legally* stay for years.

**4. The gas company has complete control.** If you're not careful, the lease may allow the gas company to set up the drilling platform as close as 200 feet from your house, in the middle of your farmland, or deep in your woodlot. It also may allow the drilling company to build roads, clear cut trees, construct pipelines, erect compressor stations (loud!), bring in hundreds of trucks, build hazardous wastewater containment ponds, and to drill 24/7. You will have no say in this process.

**5. Pain with no gain.** If you lease your surface rights, the gas company can do whatever they want on your land *without ever drilling for gas.* Without a producing well, you may get no royalty payments, just disruption & destruction of your property.

**6. Water Pollution.** The process of gas drilling (especially the hydrofracking of shale) has been shown to contaminate ground and surface water including private water wells and aquifers. Millions of gallons of water and thousands of gallons of fracking chemicals are used every time a well is drilled or re-drilled. Over 200 chemicals have been identified in fracking fluids, dozens of which are toxic to humans, animals, and plants. In addition, drilling releases naturally occurring gases and chemicals from deep underground including brine, methane, and radioactive materials. Your ponds, streams, and underground water may be tapped into for the millions of gallons of water that are needed to drill each well. There is currently no safe way to treat or dispose of this highly contaminated water.

*Gas companies routinely deny that they are the cause of poisoned water. If your neighbor's well is poisoned by drilling on your land, they can sue you.*



**7. Water wells.** If you decide to lease your land, have your water tested before, during, and after drilling. The Catch 22 is that water testing labs require a list of the chemicals they are testing for and drilling companies may not release that list to you.

**8. Air Pollution.** Natural gas drilling operations pollute the air with hazardous gases, chemicals, and the exhaust from hundreds of diesel compressors. Counties with numerous gas wells have experienced a huge increase in air pollution resulting in respiratory ailments & other health problems.

**9. Insurance.** Landowners need to consider whether their insurance companies will raise their premiums or terminate their liability coverage because of the potential for harm from gas drilling operations on their property.

*FOR SALE - Four bedroom house on 20 acres - bring cash & your own water!*



**10. Mortgages.** Some mortgage companies are putting restrictions on properties that have leased their mineral rights. A gas lease is a legally binding lien on your land and it can decrease the value of your property and make it difficult to procure a second mortgage or to sell your property in the future.

**11. Compulsory Integration.** Even if you don't want to lease, they can take it anyway. The gas company can include you in their "spacing unit" and the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation will enforce the seizure of your mineral rights under the rule of Compulsory Integration. Portions of your property can also be seized by eminent domain for pipeline, gathering lines, or for road building.

**12. What if NY State experiences the problems that have occurred in other states?** Since 2005, gas drilling has been exempted from federal Clean Water & Clean Air laws. Counties & townships have no say over where gas drills will be located or what zoning or environmental laws will apply. The NY DEC, which oversees gas & oil drilling, is chronically understaffed; its regulations are currently inadequate and have no teeth. Meanwhile, the gas companies have, repeatedly & consistently, denied responsibility for their actions and they have *unlimited* funds to fight lawsuits.



*Hundreds of huge trucks will invade our neighborhoods carrying water, drilling equipment and chemicals. They have been the frequent cause of hazardous spills, accidents, & costly road degradation.*