

# ***The Extraction of All Evil***

*Thursday, 22 Septembre 2011, Par [Xavier Frison](#)*

[Http://Www.Politis.Fr/L-Extraction-De-Tous-Les-Maux,15278.Html](http://www.politis.fr/L-Extraction-De-Tous-Les-Maux,15278.html)

**The exploitation of shale gas is not only disastrous from the technique of hydraulic fracturing. A Texas mother became a national reference in the mobilization against drilling and many other pitfalls.**

If Sharon Wilson is as focused on the fight against shale gas as she is an inattentive driver, the oil and gas industry has reason for concern. Between a red light located at a four way crossing in a blare of angry horns, this single mother of a 16 year old son tells me of her crusade against the wells starting in 2006, when they were pushing close to her home like mushrooms. She lives while Wise County, northwest of Fort Worth, in the Barnett Shale rock formation.

When the industry approached her neighborhood, she was wary. Sharon worked twelve years in the industry marketing the oil and gas before resigning, disgusted by the methods used to payoff the people leasing their minerals. But the owners of land adjacent to that of Sharon agreed to lease. Trapped, she hired a lawyer and decided to lease her land, with stipulations, rather than live with a gas well a few yards from her property. For eight hectares, it collects \$20,000. up front and between \$200 and \$500 dollars monthly royalties.

Sharon Wilson then made a donation to, [Texas Oil & Gas](#)

[Accountability Project](#), the organization for which she now works full time. She also bought a camera and computer to film everything, and to just write about the issues on her blog. Sharon replied to those who accuse her of biting the hand that feeds her: *"I took the money because the drilling would occur with or without my permission. This gives me an added responsibility in my mission to alert people about the consequences of shale gas drilling."*

---> Video here of Sharon discussing a gas well near a school in Argyle, Texas.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_jRvXnkOMaM&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_jRvXnkOMaM&feature=player_embedded)

Her [blog](#) quickly became a reference for the locals concerned about the issue, then elsewhere in the United States, including Pennsylvania, sitting on the huge rock formation in the Marcellus Shale. Concerned about the ambient air and worried about the health of her son, Sharon recently moved to a nearby county that where there is no gas drilling. Meanwhile other scandals related to drilling and fracking have cropped up. Here's a sampling:

- **Unusual increase in breast cancer:** According to the National Center for Prevention and Disease Control, counties with the most breast cancers in Texas are Tarrant, Denton, Wise, Parker, Hood and Johnson. These six counties all located in the Barnett Shale are where where emissions from the exploitation of shale gas are highest, according to records from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) made in 2010. At the very least disturbing.

- **Drilling waste used as fertilizer:** Each hydraulic fracturing involves the production of tons of water contaminated with toxic chemicals and sometimes, radioactive waste. In Texas, this fluid is simply removed and stored underground, a bit like nuclear waste. But this is expensive for the industry. So, an industry genius got the bright idea to "recycle" the waste ... agricultural fertilizer to spread on the fields! Even better, they presented the mixture as a boon to farmers to whoo would save in excess of about \$3,000 dollars per acre (2,100 euros to 4,000 m<sup>2</sup>), according to figures collected by opponents of the shale gas. Some toxic wastes would be excluded from this practice. Who performs the so-called tests, confidential and inaccessible to the public to separate the "*good seed*" from the bad? The gas industry.

- **Finding sand at all costs:** The mixture pumped into the wells to fracture the rock shale requires enormous amounts of sand, which must be found somewhere. In the lush farmland of northern Texas, for example, where EOG Resources, formerly **Enron**, has constructed a [huge "frac sand" mine](#) of several thousand hectares (photo). Local residents are concerned about the consequences of this massive extraction on their air, water, wildlife and the surrounding infrastructure (bridges, roads). The sand extraction process also requires a lot of water to separate it from other, unwanted components. Not to mention the route of the sand by the truckload to the gas wells. All this even before the start of the process of hydraulic fracturing has begun ... Fortunately, as [EOG Resources](#) contends, the mine provides "jobs and taxes for Texas and 90% of the water is recycled." Phew.



- **The transparent Gold Rush:** Sharon Wilson recently visited the Eagle Ford Shale formation in south Texas, a place particularly suitable for gas extraction, the place is experiencing a veritable "gold rush" with hundreds of industrial workers and tons of materials that go with it. Impact: Real estate prices have increased, cutting the locals out of the market. Housing construction has led to huge trucks crisscrossing the county and ruining the roads not made for such vehicles. Prostitution has also emerged. Arrests for prostitution have been made at the so-called, "Man-Camps" that house workers near gas wells, something that worries residents around the Barnett Shale.

Photo: [Save the Trinity Aquifer](#)

## **Dallas Questions**

To drill or not to drill, that is the question. Fort Worth's big

neighbor to the east has been eyeing with interest the idea of drilling for shale gas in far west Dallas. So, a Task Force was formed to consult with stakeholders and experts before making a decision that can be fraught with consequences for all. First the industry was consulted, then a week later, on August 30, with a group of environment experts of which Sharon Wilson was invited.

*"Nobody has ever been able to drill well in this country without exposing the population to major health risks,"* said Ms. Wilson, who was joined by a petroleum engineer and a hydrologist who shared her concerns. *"If Dallas starts drilling, the question is not when people are facing serious problems, but, how and to what extent."* A decision expected in October.