

Georgia Straight

Potential impact of banning hydraulic fracking unknown, industry rep says

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By [Matthew Burrows](#)

A Calgary-based representative of the unconventional gas industry has said he doesn't know what the economic implications of banning [hydraulic fracking](#) would be.

"I don't think anyone really knows," **Kevin Heffernan**, vice president of the Canadian Society for Unconventional Gas, told the *Straight* by phone in February. "It may have an impact. Natural gas comes from conventional and unconventional reservoirs. So commercial reservoirs, there really isn't any fracking required, in some cases. Unconventional reservoirs, often there is a requirement for hydraulic fracking of one form or another. So there would be an impact, but I don't think anybody knows what it would be."

Will Koop, coordinator of the B.C. Tap Water Alliance, is calling for a provincial ban on fracking, a high-pressure rock-splitting process, which involves the injection of water and additives into the ground to extract natural gas.

"What it does is it injects with high volumes of water with chemicals; it's allowed to punch through what otherwise would be very difficult to do," Koop [told](#) the *Straight* last month. "What this procedure does, aside from the use of toxics, it compromises the integrity of aquifer caverns."

Asked what the impact of a fracking ban would be on employment in B.C., Heffernan said, "I guess the response is the same. There would continue to be a conventional gas industry. There would certainly be an impact, because the resources that are being developed these days, there is a really good portion I would say that are unconventional resources."

Heffernan added that fracking has been going on for "decades". He said he believes the first U.S. well was hydraulically fracked in 1947.

In Canada, fracking began in the 1950s, according to Heffernan.