

B. C. TAP WATER ALLIANCE

Email – info@bctwa.org

Website – www.bctwa.org

Stop Fracking British Columbia – www.bctwa.org/FrackingBC.html



ALLIANCE DEMANDS ENERGY MINISTER RICH COLEMAN'S RESIGNATION

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For Immediate Release

Vancouver: On Saturday evening November 5, 2011, [Global TV's program 16:9 aired *Untested Science*](#), an investigation of the petroleum industry's controversial, brute force practice of fracking (hydraulic fracturing) for unconventional gas and its harmful cumulative impacts on the environment and human health in Alberta and British Columbia. A segment of this program grilled BC's Minister of Energy for failing to implement his promise last June of extensive public consultation on one of numerous related projects underway in northeast BC.

In one of the fracking zones near the town of Hudson's Hope, Talisman Energy and Canbriam Energy were each granted 20-year, 10 million litres/day, water withdrawal permits by the B.C. government. The twin permits for a combined annual withdrawal of 7.3 billion litres of water were granted *without* "an extensive process of public consultation" as *promised* by Energy Minister Rich Coleman in BC's Legislature on June 1, 2011.

The Alaska Highway News reported on the issue on August 2nd, quoting BC MLA Bob Simpson: " "Despite the Minister's promise, the Oil & Gas Commission approved the pipelines without consulting the public and before the water licenses were even approved. Then this week a water license was approved without any notification to the public, let alone holding 'extensive' consultations and discussions." He explained the government's handling of the Williston Reservoir pipelines is indicative of complete absence of public policy guiding BC's natural gas industry."

The two energy companies are almost finished building a 60 kilometre-long twin water pipeline right-of-way corridor from BC Hydro's Williston Reservoir to the Farrell Creek fracking lease concessions north of Hudson's Hope, where Talisman alone plans to repeatedly frack some 1,400 wells. Some gas pads may have up to 20 wells or more and up to or more than 20 completions for each well. Fracks may use up to or more than 4,000 cubic metres of water which is treated with toxins before being injected underground. (One thousand cubic metres of water is equivalent to one million litres of water, and about 2,500 cubic metres of water fit into an Olympic swimming pool.) Large proportions of contaminated water returning to the surface up the well bore must be disposed of and perhaps treated. Frack flow back may be radioactive.

Talisman, which refused being interviewed by Global despite promising to do so, has recently obtained concessions to experimentally frack in Poland, the new portal for the petroleum industry in Europe. On December 1, 2011, Talisman Energy Canada's water sustainability advisor Keith Minnich is scheduled to speak in Warsaw at the *Shale Gas World* conference. Conference themes include calming down Europeans through public relations messaging.

"Mr. Coleman *misled* the Speaker of the House, the Legislative Assembly and the public in it's court of law. The Minister's misgivings and sorry excuse in 16:9's interview about granting the 20-year contracts on a topic rife with controversy, amidst growing public awareness without public planning, is utterly inexcusable," said Will Koop, Coordinator of the B.C. Tap Water Alliance. "Mr. Coleman failed the public. The Premier must not only call for his resignation, but enact our request for a public inquiry and a moratorium on fracking in BC."

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Contact Will Koop - email - info@bctwa.org

- [Link to B.C. Tap Water Alliance April 14, 2011 press release calling on a Public Inquiry into Fracking](#)
- [Link to B.C. Tap Water Alliance YouTube video of Talisman's operations](#)
- [Link to B.C. Tap Water Alliance's report on the absence of Cumulative Effects studies](#)