

Have you heard the DEC and the gas drilling industry claim that DEC regulation is stringent and that no further protections or restrictions are necessary? In fact, DEC policy is so heavily influenced by industry lobbyists that their “research” is cited on DEC's website.

At DEC's website, <http://www.dec.ny.gov> , a search for “Ground Water Protection Council” will yield several results, including this URL: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/about/47291.html> . On this page the reader finds a report by the Ground Water Protection Council, on the purported safety of hydraulic fracturing.

But just who is the Ground Water Protection Council? In fact, they're really not about groundwater protection; they're a front & lobbying group composed of industries that have an interest in maintaining the current legal and permissive status – a status they take credit for engineering - of the **underground injection** method of toxic waste disposal – a method that is implicated in **causing** groundwater contamination (<http://pollutionissues.com/Ho-Li/Injection-Well.htm>) The following statements in quotation marks are excerpted from the website as it appeared in December 2008 http://gwpc.org/about_us/about_us.htm . Statements in bold are explanations and/or where necessary, translations into plain English:

<p>"The founders also sought to develop a strong public outreach/education program to inform the public about the safety of the national UIC program and to develop information that could be used by the states to enhance this effort."</p>	<p>Members of industry who need a place to put the vast amounts of toxic waste generated by their activities had in mind an effective information machine to convince the public that the national <u>Underground Injection Control</u> program that we engineered to meet our own needs is safe and to enlist assistance from state bureaucracy who have a vested interest in letting us do what we want to do."</p>
<p>"GWPC and its Foundation have been credited with carrying out many successful projects that have had significant outcomes regarding best management practices and fair but effective laws regarding comprehensive ground water protection."</p>	<p>"Fair": "we helped write it to be as little trouble for us as we could possibly get away with."</p>
<p>"The original charter and organizational structure sought out participation by the various state agencies and impacted industries affected by various regulations related to ground water protection. This principle of inclusion is important because of the commitment to hear all view points on issues that the states are charged with regulating.</p>	<p>With the creation of a foundation with a nice-sounding name, it becomes more legitimate for government regulatory agencies to be in conversation with the bad guys - and now it's a conversation among equals, rather than a regulator- to-regulated relationship. In fact, now it's negotiation, not regulation.</p>
<p>"The GWPC was founded upon a sound principal [sic] from which it has never wavered. It has matured into a respected national association of state ground water and UIC agencies. Along the way, GWPC has had a significant impact in affecting national policy in underground injection and ground water protection."</p>	<p>The “sound principle” is never stated – but is easy enough to infer: the most effective way to weaken regulation is to co-opt and compromise the regulating bodies.</p> <p>Note a "significant impact in affecting national policy" - not a significant impact in actually preserving and protecting ground water.</p>

<p>“GWPC’s Direct Involvement with UIC Issues:</p> <p>“1) Mitigated parts of the Land Ban which would have banned all deep well disposal of hazardous waste in 1988</p> <p>“2) Determined difference between significant and non-significant compliance for Class I & II wells</p> <p>“3) Provided leadership in definition of wastes eligible for disposal in Class I & II wells</p> <p>“4) Conducted a national survey on the effects of hydraulic fracturing on ground water quality”</p>	<p>Items 1, 2, & 3 are admissions that this organization is responsible for weakening standards that protect water and people. Why would they admit this? The fact that they do tells you whose interests they really serve - who their actual constituency is.</p> <p>Item 4: (“conducted a <i>survey</i>”) belies their claim to provide “sound science” (see just below). Those quotation marks are very appropriate - but in a way the writer surely did not intend.</p>
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<p>“How the GWPC Uses Corporate Support</p> <p>“Corporate support provides GWPC with the means to conduct independent technical and policy studies that can be used to ensure that "sound science" is applied in national rule making that effects [sic] state and federal ground water and underground injection programs.”</p>	<p>See above.</p>
<p>“Benefits of GWPC Corporate Support</p> <p>“One word, COMMUNICATION. As a corporate supporter of the GWPC you meet and communicate with representatives of the state and federal agencies that administer the regulations with which your company must comply. As a member of GWPC your input is welcomed as we consider technical issues, rules, and legislation affecting the national UIC programs.”</p>	<p>“One word: COMMUNICATION”</p> <p>- where they admit that they're really just lobbyists.</p>

So...why would an organization representing industries that specialize in underground injection of toxic waste be advocating the purported safety of hydraulic fracturing? Because hydraulic fracturing creates massive volumes of liquid toxic wastes that must be disposed of, and one of the few ways to do that is underground injection.

There's only one reason for an organization like this; its very existence is an admission that underground injection of industrial and hazardous wastes is a failure in terms of the environment and public health and therefore needs constant defense and offense to keep it legal.

And their documents are cited as evidence of the purported safety of hydraulic fracturing, by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, the agency in charge of regulating the industry and protecting your environment.

Think about it.