

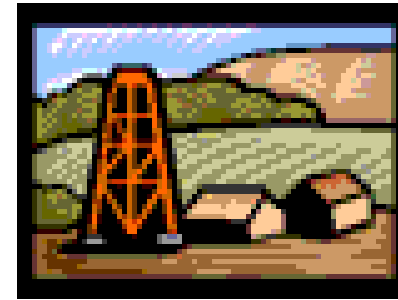


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Community Health Risk Assessment Of Oil and Gas Impacts In Garfield County

Oil and gas activity within Garfield County has generated public concern with regard to impacts on both the environment and public health. Often, public perception of potential health risks becomes an overriding concern. The public may feel as though their health is at risk and they may wish to obtain an understanding of possible threats to their health, as well as acknowledgement by the oil and gas industries of their concerns. Opening this dialogue through research and presentation of findings from a "neutral" third party will promote an informed discussion of the real and perceived impacts of extractive industries and could serve as a focal point for collaborative resolutions to community and industry concerns over the balance between the risks and benefits of natural resource extraction.

St. Mary's Saccomanno Research Institute and Mesa State College, with the help of communities in Garfield County, are collaborating to conduct a study of health risks related to oil and gas industry activities. This project involves a "three-pronged" approach to the assessment of human health risks:

Community focus groups: Facilitated discussions with residents of impacted communities in Garfield County will be conducted to identify public perceptions of health risks related to local natural gas extraction activities and priority health problems experienced by area residents.

Human Health Risk Assessment:

A) An evaluation of toxins in the environment and the potential exposures to local residents will be completed using available data, as well as additional field studies of air, water and soil quality. The resulting information will be incorporated into standard human health exposure models to determine dose and risk. As part of the risk determination, all potential sources of contaminant exposures in the area will be identified. Incorporation of these environmental exposures into risk models will be important for helping community members to understand the relative contributions of oil and gas activities versus other environmental impacts on local human health.

B) A targeted health survey will be administered to area residents by trained interviewers. The in-home surveys will obtain information about the general health and health risk factors of residents, as well as information about specific health conditions that are identified as priority concerns during focus group discussions. When available, quantitative data on public health will be obtained from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and other sources, to add to the picture of community health.

Data Analysis and Communication: All of this information will be compiled and presented back to the community in a series of educational forums and public meetings. Saccomanno Research Institute and Mesa State College hope that the outcomes of this study will clarify public concerns and identify present and future human health risks that need to be addressed. Other goals are to provide education to the public about the probability of risk and bring attention to issues that the public may believe to have been ignored.