

Gas Well Drilling Frequently Asked Questions

DISCLAIMER:

The City does not lease nor provide advice about leasing **private** property for gas exploration and drilling. Information provided by the City addresses general issues related to gas drilling and mineral leases and is not intended to provide advice on any specific legal matter or factual situation. This information is not intended to create and its receipt does not constitute a lawyer-client relationship. Readers should not act upon this information without seeking professional legal counsel. Gas companies offering leases for gas exploration and drilling for privately owned minerals, including those with the words "Burleson" as part of their name or logo, are not associated with or endorsed by the City of Burleson.

What is the Barnett Shale?

The Barnett Shale is a large natural gas reserve that stretches underground across a 15 county area. It contains an estimated 26 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and is located approximately 1.5 miles below the surface. In recent years, advances in drilling technology have made it possible for energy companies to extract large amounts of natural gas from the Barnett Shale.

How can I find out if a natural gas well permit has been obtained near my property or additional information about gas well drilling within our city limits?

If a gas drilling operator has requested a drilling permit within 1000 feet from your residence, you will receive a notification concerning the request. Residents with any questions or concerns regarding gas drilling are encouraged to attend gas drilling public meetings.

Does the drilling harm the environment?

Drilling for natural gas is more environmentally friendly than drilling for oil. Drilling and extracting natural gas is cleaner. With the advent of directional and horizontal drilling technology, natural gas wells have a much smaller impact on land than oil wells and new drilling techniques are more energy efficient and quieter.

Can someone else own the minerals underneath my property? How can I tell if I own my minerals?

Yes – It is possible that the mineral ownership may be different than surface ownership. A deed/title search may be necessary for one to determine who actually owns the minerals under a piece of property.

How far must a well be from my property or public structures/areas?

The distance requirement is regulated by the city's gas ordinance. No well may be drilled closer than 500 feet from any protected use such as a residence, religious institution, public building, hospital, school or public park without a waiver from the protected use owners or City Council approval.

Will drilling affect the foundation of my house?

There is no documented evidence of drilling affecting foundations. Most foundation problems occurring in the North Texas area are a result of ground swell and contraction

during alternating periods of wet and dry weather.

What emergency plans are in place in case of an accident?

In the case of gas wells, it has been determined that one plan is not a viable alternative and that if a situation should arise, it should be handled based on the type of incident and the information available.

Does the city profit when drilling takes place on private property?

No—the City only profits from natural gas drilling on city-owned property. Only the mineral owner and the mineral lessee profit from the operations. The City does receive ad valorem taxes, which are assessed and collected by the Tarrant County Appraisal District.

Can a gas well be placed on my property without my permission?

As a general rule, an operator would rather have the surface owner's permission before putting a well site on a particular property and will pay appropriate damage fees to the surface owners. Any other actions would be preceded by legal action involving the operator and the property owner.

What can I expect when a company is going to drill in my area?

A sign will be placed near the proposed well site advising that a permit application has been submitted. Notices will be sent to residents/property owners within 1000 feet of the well site. Additionally, staff sends a separate notice to residents/property owners if a proposed well is to be located within 1000 feet of any protected use. A pad generally 300' X 300' will be prepared and a drilling rig will move onto the location. The drilling rig will be on site for approximately 20 to 30 days actually "drilling" the well and running pipe into the open hole. After the well is drilled the drilling rig will move off. The rig move and drilling is a 24 hour operation and is probably the noisiest part of the operation. Shortly thereafter, well "completion" will begin and a smaller portable rig will move onto the location. After completion operations, surface equipment will be installed along with appropriate fencing and gates. From this point there will be minimal activity on the location. Occasionally a small rig will be brought to the location for remedial work.

Is the City monitoring our water supply due to water usage by the drillers?

The City of Burleson Water Department monitors *all* usage of water in the City.

Who can I call if I have a question or a complaint?

Questions regarding drilling and operation of gas wells may be directed to the Gas Well Inspection Section at 817-447-5410

Will someone be on the drilling site at all times?

During drilling operations there are personnel on-site 24 hours. Completion operations are usually conducted during the day, but personnel may be on-site 24 hours during a short flow-back period. If there are not personnel on-site (Operations or Private Security), then the site/equipment must be secured.