

Update on Hydraulic Fracturing Review

Committee members focused on the creation of key elements to be part of the final report, including a chronology of all petroleum exploration wells drilled in the province; a summary of best practices from non-regulator sources; a list of potential environmental impacts for further risk analysis, and initial key findings on work completed to date for further discussion by the committee. The list of environmental impacts was created from a facilitated session that brought committee members together with senior technical staff from the Department of Environment and operational field staff of the Department of Energy to discuss environmental risks and impacts associated with various activities.

In late October, two committee members attended a conference in Red Deer, Alberta hosted by Synergy Alberta to learn about community engagement in that province. Synergy Alberta is a non-profit organization that works as an umbrella group to support community discussion of oil and gas issues between residents, industry and regulators. The synergy groups provide a process for respectful dialogue about any oil and gas activity and the opportunity for voices to be heard and questions asked of operators or regulators. Communications, conflict resolution and resource sharing are some of the roles of these synergy groups and this community engagement model. Residents or communities looking for more information on this process, please visit www.synergyalberta.ca and its [resources page](#) on how to start a synergy group.

In October, different committee members attended various meetings, conferences, training and educational opportunities, the Produced Water for Oil and Gas Operations regulatory course and a Shale Gas Water Management Conference in Houston, TX, and the Canadian Unconventional Resources Conference in Calgary, Alberta. Committee members are also availing of all opportunities to meet with other jurisdictions through these conferences.

The committee has also included the report, *“Is Natural Gas a Climate Change Solution for Canada”* by The Pembina Institute and David Suzuki Foundation, 2011, in its list of reports and studies being reviewed. This report provides an in-depth economic analysis of natural gas as relevant to climate change. The report discusses if natural gas can act as a bridge fuel for more renewable types of energy, and provides examples of different economic modeling studies which compare natural gas consumption rates under greenhouse gas reduction policies. The report also explores what it terms “non-climate environmental impacts” related to natural gas development (pages 14-19). These include impacts on air, water, the landscape and quality of life. The role of environmental assessment and addressing cumulative impacts related to natural gas development is also considered (pages 19-20). The report concludes with several policy recommendations related to natural gas development that address climate impacts, mitigating air pollution, mitigating threats to water, public engagement and environmental assessment, and eliminating incentives. Aspects of this report dealing with areas under the committee’s scope of study will be considered for review. To view the report visit <http://www.pembina.org/pub/2240>