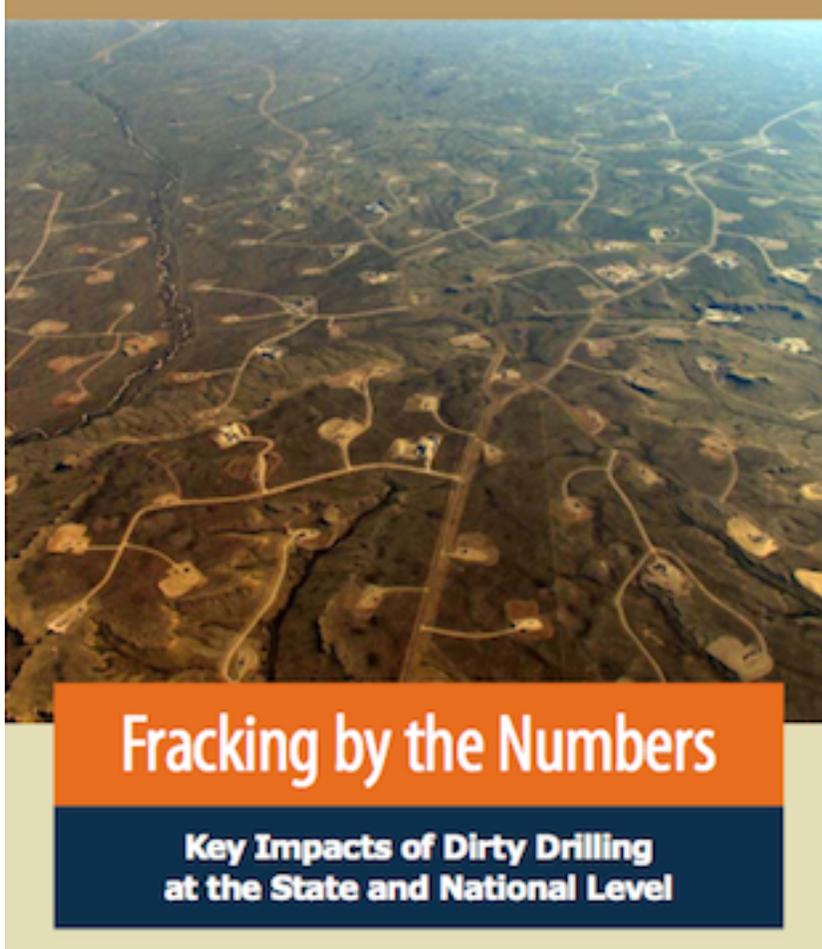


# Groundbreaking Report Calculates Damage Done by Fracking

[Environment America](#) | October 3, 2013 1:04 pm |



As federal policy makers decide on rules for [fracking](#) on [public lands](#), a new report calculates the toll of this dirty drilling on our environment, including 280 billion gallons of toxic [wastewater](#) generated by fracking in 2012—enough to flood all of Washington, DC, in a 22-foot deep toxic lagoon. The [Environment America](#) Research & Policy Center [report](#), *Fracking by the Numbers*, is the first to measure the damaging footprint of fracking to date.

“The numbers don’t lie—fracking has taken a dirty and destructive toll on our environment,” said John Rumpler, senior attorney for Environment America. “If this dirty drilling continues unchecked, these numbers will only get worse.”

“At health clinics, we’re seeing nearby residents experiencing nausea, headaches and other [symptoms linked to fracking pollution](#),” said David Brown, a toxicologist who has reviewed health data from Pennsylvania. “With billions of gallons of toxic waste coming each year, we’re just seeing the ‘tip of the iceberg’ in terms of health risks.”

The report measured key indicators of fracking threats across the country, including:

- 280 billion gallons of toxic wastewater generated in 2012—enough to flood all of Washington, DC, in a 22-foot deep toxic lagoon
- 450,000 tons of air pollution produced in one year
- 250 billion gallons of fresh water used since 2005
- 360,000 acres of land degraded since 2005
- 100 million metric tons of global warming pollution since 2005

Fracking also inflicts other damage not quantified in the report—ranging from [contamination of residential wells](#) to ruined roads to [earthquakes at disposal sites](#).

**Table ES-1. National Environmental and Public Health Impacts of Fracking**

<b>Fracking Wells since 2005</b>	82,000
<b>Toxic Wastewater Produced in 2012 (billion gallons)</b>	280
<b>Water Used since 2005 (billion gallons)</b>	250
<b>Chemicals Used since 2005 (billion gallons)</b>	2
<b>Air Pollution in One Year (tons)</b>	450,000
<b>Global Warming Pollution since 2005 (million metric tons CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent)</b>	100
<b>Land Directly Damaged since 2005 (acres)</b>	360,000

Reviewing the totality of this fracking damage, the report’s authors conclude:

Given the scale and severity of fracking’s myriad impacts, constructing a regulatory regime sufficient to protect the environment and public health from dirty drilling—much less enforcing such safeguards at more than 80,000 wells, plus processing and waste disposal sites across the country—seems implausible. In states where fracking is already

underway, an immediate moratorium is in order. In all other states, banning fracking is the prudent and necessary course to protect the environment and public health.

At the federal level, the report's data on land destroyed by fracking operations comes as the Obama Administration considers a rule for fracking on public lands, and as the oil and gas industry is seeking to expand fracking to several places which help provide drinking water for millions of Americans—including the White River National Forest in Colorado and the [Delaware River basin](#), which provides drinking water for more than 15 million Americans.

Along with the new numbers in today's report, Environment America's John Rumpler added one more: the [more than 1 million public comments submitted this summer](#) to the Obama administration rejecting its proposed rule for fracking on public lands as far too weak. Environment America is urging President Obama to follow the recommendation of his administration's advisory panel on fracking to keep sensitive areas as off-limits to fracking.

FRACKING GENERATED  
**280 BILLION GALLONS**  
OF TOXIC **WASTEWATER** IN 2012



ENOUGH TO SUBMERGE  
**WASHINGTON, D.C.**  
IN A 22-FOOT DEEP  
**TOXIC LAGOON**

“We need decisive action from Washington to protect our communities,” said John Fenton, a rancher from Pavillion, Wyoming who last week appealed to federal officials to re-open an investigation into contamination of drinking water there.

“The bottom line is this: The numbers on fracking add up to an environmental nightmare,” said Rumpler. “For our environment and for public health, we need to put a stop to fracking.”

Of particular concern are the billions of gallons of toxic waste created from fracking, which threaten the environment, public health and drinking water. Environment America is calling on federal officials to close the loophole that exempts this waste from our nation’s hazardous waste law. Rep. Matt Cartwright (PA-17) has introduced the CLEANER Act, H.R. 2825, to close that loophole.

“The data from today’s report shows that fracking is taking a dirty and destructive toll on our environment and health,” concluded Rumpler. “It’s time for our federal officials to step up; they can start by keeping fracking out of our forests and away from our parks, and closing the loophole exempting toxic fracking waste from our nation’s hazardous waste law.”

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A preview of the EcoWatch newsletter. The header reads "EcoWatch Cutting Edge Environmental News Service Top News of the Day". Below the header, there are two main articles. The first is titled "U.S. Offshore Wind Power: A Step Closer to Reality" and features a photograph of wind turbines. The second article is titled "Rebuild the Dream: A Conversation with Van Jones" and features a portrait of Van Jones.

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