



MARYLAND ATTORNEY GENERAL
Douglas F. Gansler

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For Immediate Release

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**Attorney General Gansler Announces Landowner
Education Campaign on Natural Gas Drilling Contracts**
*"Fracking" process, high-pressure sales tactics pose
potential risks in Maryland's Marcellus Shale region*
*Push is part of ongoing effort to protect citizens,
environment from abuse*

BALTIMORE, MD (July 19, 2011) - Protecting landowners in Western Maryland from the high-pressure sales tactics of natural gas drilling speculators is at the center of an education campaign announced today by Attorney General Douglas F. Gansler. Speculators are seeking to obtain mineral rights in the Maryland portion of the Marcellus Shale, a large rock formation stretching from upstate New York to southwestern Virginia which contains natural gas deposits. Landowners whose properties sit above the Marcellus Shale should know their legal rights and potential risks from leasing their land to energy companies interested in drilling for natural gas using the process known as hydraulic fracturing or "fracking."

"Fracking poses significant risks to the land and the groundwater beneath it," said Attorney General Gansler. "Every landowner needs to be armed with accurate knowledge of these risks in order to safeguard his or her legal rights when being asked to lease mineral rights."

With the expertise of a core legal team assigned by Attorney General Gansler to protect Marylanders from environmental damage and the unscrupulous sales tactics of some energy companies, the Maryland Office of the Attorney General (OAG) has produced and distributed two documents designed to inform and educate landowners about their rights.

[*Leasing Your Land for Natural Gas Drilling - Tips for the Landowner*](#) and the [*Dormant Minerals Interest Act - Questions and Answers*](#) are available to any landowner or interested party at the OAG website: <http://www.oag.state.md.us/>.

The educational campaign is the latest action taken by Attorney General Gansler to protect Maryland's environment from the risks that accompany fracking. In April, 2011, the OAG filed a notice of intent to sue Chesapeake Energy, a natural gas drilling company with more than 30 wells in the Pennsylvania portion of the Marcellus Shale formation, after it released thousands of gallons of potentially hazardous "fracking" fluids into a waterway that feeds into the Susquehanna River, which flows into Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay.

Additionally, the OAG is providing legal assistance to Governor Martin O'Malley's Advisory Commission created last month to study the environmental and economic impact of natural gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale formation of Western Maryland. The Governor announced his appointments to the advisory commission today.

For more information on leasing mineral rights and Marcellus Shale visit:

- *Leasing Your Land for Natural Gas Drilling - Tips for the Landowner:*

http://www.oag.state.md.us/Environment/MS_leasing.pdf

- *Dormant Minerals Interest Act - Questions and Answers:*

http://www.oag.state.md.us/Environment/DMIA_QAs.pdf

- The Maryland Geological Survey:

<http://www.mgs.md.gov/geo/pub/MarcellusShaleGeology.pdf>.

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