

## Southern Tier residents fear fracking test

by Justin Sarjeant

May 25, 2012

Toxics Targeting, an environmental database website, has released a letter with more than 1,600 signatures requesting Gov. Andrew Cuomo block a feared three-year hydraulic fracturing test project in the Southern Tier, as well as continue to review the potential environmental impact.

Hydraulic fracturing, or hydrofracking, is the process of blasting a mixture of water, sand and chemicals to break up rock and release natural gas.

"Pressure on Gov. Cuomo continues to build regarding the fate of Marcellus Shale gas extraction in New York," said Toxics Targeting President Walter Hang. "That is why we must make absolutely sure that no wretchedly bad compromise deals are struck to provide political cover for the powers that be."

The three-year hydrofracking demonstration described by the organization – but not widely publicized elsewhere – involves the Department of Environmental Conservation issuing permits for no more than 100 wells annually in the Broome, Tioga and Chemung counties. The wells would be monitored in a few major areas and would be a test to whether hydrofracking is safe.

"Shale gas extraction must not be allowed in the Southern Tier or any other areas of New York until it is safe for all areas of our state, including the New York City and Syracuse watersheds," wrote Hang. "Until there is a consensus among local, state and federal government authorities, as well as potentially impacted parties that these concerns have been fully resolved, we request that you maintain New York's horizontal hydraulic fracturing moratorium."



Advocates against hydrofracking fear the Southern Tier will be used as a testing ground. *Photo by AP.*