

DISCLOSURE OF THE CHEMICALS USED IN FRAC FLUIDS – WHAT IS GOING ON?

John A. Veil*

Veil Environmental, LLC

1081 Carriage Hill Ct.

Annapolis, MD 21401

Voice: 410-212-0950

john@veilenvironmental.com

Hydraulic fracturing has been performed on oil and gas wells since the 1940s to create suitable pathways within the formation to allow the hydrocarbon product to move to a production well. Until the past few years, little was heard about hydraulic fracturing outside of the industry. With the rapid expansion of shale gas developments from the Barnett to the Fayetteville, Haynesville, Woodford, Marcellus, Eagle Ford, and Bakken Shales, thousands of wells are being fraced each year. Some of these shale plays have extended into regions that have little historical familiarity with oil and gas operations. The public and press in these regions have focused on the potential hazards posed by gas development and fraccing. One of their leading concerns is the identity of the chemicals added to the frac fluids and how much of each chemical is typically used. The major service companies that conduct the frac jobs have claimed that the chemicals they select are proprietary and represent the result of their own research. They have been reluctant to give away any of their intellectual property to the public. This unwillingness to share chemical information has stimulated additional fears from the public.

The U.S. Congress introduced several bills that would require frac companies to disclose the identity of the products they use. As of August 2011, none of the national bills have passed. At the state level, several states have taken the lead and have adopted regulations requiring the gas companies to share the identity of all chemicals used in fraccing each well. Each of these states has its own details and requirements for chemical disclosure. In April 2011, the Ground Water Protection Council and the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission jointly developed and opened a new chemical Registry. The Registry is part of the Frac Focus website (www.fracfocus.org). Gas companies can voluntarily enter information about the ingredients used in their frac fluids. Data have been entered for thousands of wells already.

This presentation will review the ingredients in frac fluids, the various state regulations affecting disclosure, and will introduce the Frac Focus chemical Registry.

###