

NJ Township to PennEast: None shall Pass!

By ACSH Staff — August 18, 2015



Hopewell Township, New Jersey has decided to block an

expansion of the PennEast Pipeline through the township. The pipeline was proposed to bring natural gas from Marcellus shale deposits in Pennsylvania to previously existing pipelines in the area. What were their reasons to object? The same tired anti-fracking rhetoric that has been spun by activists who have somehow forgotten they lobbied for more natural gas just two decades ago.

Yes, the fuel extracted by fracking in the Marcellus shale is not a carbon free emission source but it is certainly much better than burning coal and opponents have made the perfect the enemy of the good, just like they did with nuclear energy. [We are back to CO2 levels from the 1990s](#) [1] thanks in large part to natural gas from fracking. But do the leaders of this New Jersey township want to hear this? No. Instead they handpicked the "experts" that fed them lines about how the pipeline will lead to more asthma and that fracking pollutes ground water sources with methane. Its a wonder that the latter is still circulated as even the [EPA has acknowledged that fracking does not contaminate ground water](#) [2].

What's really absurd about this decision was that despite the township's decision, the area and the state of New Jersey will still continue to reap the benefits of fracked natural gas. As our Senior Director of Medicine and Public Health Dr. Gilbert Ross pointed out in an [op-ed in the](#) [3] *Star-Ledger*, [3] *"(the) state utilizes natural gas for three-quarters of its heat, and that figure will only grow."*

Blocking this one pipeline will not stop fracking nor will it stop New Jersey from using natural gas. Leaders in Hopewell are still going to benefit from lower cost, cleaner energy even as they engage in a feel-good fallacy about denying fossil fuels.

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[1] <http://acsh.org/2015/07/if-you-care-about-climate-change-you-have-to-embrace-fracking/>

[2] <http://www2.epa.gov/hfstudy>

[3] http://www.nj.com/opinion/index.ssf/2015/08/case_against_penneast_pipeline_places_anti-frackin.html