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Paterson offers draft energy plan

Marcellus Shale gas cited as possible source of fuel

BY HEATHER SENISON • ALBANY BUREAU • AUGUST 11, 2009

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ALBANY - Gov. David Paterson on Monday released a draft of a state energy plan that aims to make New York a clean-energy state, labeling the Southern Tier's Marcellus Shale [natural gas](#) reserve as a possible source of fuel.

"We need to make energy more affordable for New Yorkers, and we need to do it in a way that recognizes that the country is moving towards a carbon-constrained economy," Paterson said in a statement.

The Marcellus Shale stretches from southwestern New York to Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio. New York imports more than 95 percent of its natural gas from the Gulf Coast and Canada, with 5 percent being produced in-state. The Marcellus Shale is estimated to have roughly 50 trillion cubic feet of natural gas reserves, but it is unclear how much is accessible in New York.

Paterson estimates that tapping into the Marcellus Shale and implementing other clean energy-related plans, such as restructuring 1 million homes to make them [energy efficient](#), will create new jobs.

However, an expert on renewable energy said the report that Paterson's Energy Planning Board released Monday does not account for the cost of tapping into the reserve.

Adam Flint, a member of the Binghamton Regional Sustainability Coalition, said the cost of improved infrastructure and the extraction process could be very high. For example, the process can be damaging to water sources and the emissions from trucks used to transport the gas could as much as high as a whole city's emissions, Flint said.

"The costs to make natural-gas production clean

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* Public hearings on the state's energy plan are being held in several locations around the state. The closest hearing in the Southern Tier region is 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 25 at the Broome County Forum Theatre; 236 Washington St., Binghamton.
 * On the Web: nysenergyplan.com

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and safe and helpful are very, very significant," Flint said. "We don't actually know how much it would be, but it would be a lot."

Paterson said New York has enough regulations in place to keep the process of extracting gas from the Marcellus Shale safe, but Flint said the state Department of Environmental [Conservation](#) lacks the manpower to enforce the regulations.

Other proposals in the report include Paterson's goal to reduce electricity use by 15 percent below forecasts in 2015 and to increase the use of renewable energy to 30 percent by 2015; about 11 percent of the state's energy currently comes from renewable energy. It calls for the development of a Climate Action Plan to identify strategies and infrastructure needs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, a goal Paterson announced last week.

The plan also recommends developing energy efficiency programs to reach low-income New Yorkers who are most vulnerable to rising energy prices. The report also says the state should consider the expansion of nuclear power.

But Laura Haight, senior environmental associate at the New York Public Interest Research Group, said that the debate over a new nuclear facility would take away from other environmental initiatives.

The final state energy plan is to be released in November. Nine public hearings on the plan will be held across the state.

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truthsqadtwo wrote:

"Paterson said New York has enough regulations in place to keep the process of extracting gas from the Marcellus Shale safe". If Paterson actually said this, then he is commenting on safety before the sGEIS he ordered last July, 2008 is even completed. That makes a mockery of the trustworthiness of the sGEIS. It is ridiculous for him to state that, and it shows the level of his ignorance on the matter, or his collusion with the O&G Industry. Paterson, and Commissioner Grannis, desperately want drilling to happen. They will not allow it in the NYC watershed. The question is, will the rest of the State's population allow this inherently polluting drilling process to destroy their water, health and quality of life by transforming entire landscapes into industrial wastelands?

8/11/2009 6:04:23 PM

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truthsqadtwo wrote:

cwhizzle wrote: "And this is an industry that is not asking the state for anything. They don't have their hands out like so many other industries...". Mr. Whizzle is ignoring the huge Federal tax breaks that have been given to the O&G Industry, year after year. More importantly, he is ignoring the exemptions given to this industry by the 2005 Federal Energy Bill. It gives major exemptions to the industry from the Clean Air, Safe Drinking Water, Right to Know, and Superfund Acts (among others). IT IS THE ONLY INDUSTRY TO RECEIVE SUCH ENVIRONMENTAL EXEMPTIONS. Mr. Whizzle ignores the fact that the Industry does not want PA or NY to levy a severance tax on the gas or oil they take and profit from, even though all other States levy it, including Texas and Louisiana. This sure seems like a HUGE HAND stuck WAY OUT to me.

8/11/2009 5:45:52 PM

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truthsqadtwo wrote:

cwhizzle says he educates himself with facts, when it is just O&G Industry talking points. Specifically, they (and I have also heard Commissioner Grannis say this) love to state to the effect that there are more than 14,000 active wells in NYS, and like cwhizzle, "we never hear about pollution". First, the vast majority of these wells are like "grandpa's" wells, they bear no resemblance to what is currently proposed with horizontal drilling/hydraulic fracturing into shale. This type of well increases all aspects of drilling by a factor of FIFTY (water usage, truck traffic and so on). Secondly, Earthjustice recently revealed through a FOIA request, that the NYSDEC

has never performed one study on pollution caused by drilling. If no studies are performed, no reports are generated. This is why "no one" has heard about pollution in NYS. In reality, there have been over 52 cases of drinking water pollution due to drilling in PA since 2004 alone. Cwhizzle, do some real research.
8/11/2009 5:34:14 PM

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cwhizzle wrote:

Environmentalists will tell you that Marcellus drillers will pollute the world and cause us all to go mad. I understand there are 13,000 gas and oil wells in new york that are active, yet we never hear about pollution. It's because drilling is being done safely.

The more I educate myself with facts, not scare tactics, the more I'm convinced that drilling is a great thing. And this is an industry that is not asking the state for anything. They don't have their hands out like so many other industries and businesses.

8/11/2009 4:44:08 PM

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jamescrowley wrote:

While there still seems some work to be done on figuring out the Marcellus Shale logistics, Gov. Paterson's energy draft looks very comprehensive and good. This could go a long way in helping New York become so much more energy efficient.
8/11/2009 4:02:10 PM

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