

# County of Lycoming Community Gas Exploration Task Force



October 3, 2008

## **“Gas Well Flaring?”**

*by CGETF Public Safety Committee*

One of the more visible aspects of gas well drilling is “flaring” or a controlled burning of gas. After a well has been hydro-fractured, water is recovered from it. Along with the water is natural gas. The water is held for eventual off-site treatment and the gas burned in a controlled manner. Gas flows into a twenty to sixty foot tall flare stack where it is ignited. The flaring process typically continues 24 hours a day for from two days to a week. During the period, fire is seen at the top of the stack.

Once the hydro-fracture water has been recovered, the well is shut in or capped. Upon shut in, flaring ceases. The well remains shut in until connected to the gathering pipeline system.

Flaring will become more prevalent as gas well drilling increases throughout the county. Flaring wells on hillsides and mountain tops will be visible to the public for some distance. The glare might be more enhanced during fog or low cloud weather conditions.

Gas drilling companies notify the Lycoming County 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Center when a well is to be flared and again when flaring is discontinued. The County will in turn advise local emergency response officials.

This information is presented to educate the public about the routine, controlled burning aspect of the flaring process.