

SIX TRICKS OF LANDSMEN & GAS COMPANY REPS

"All gas men are professionals. We're all amateurs." A Sullivan County landowner

1. THE BIG RUSH

The gas in this part of the country has been trapped in shale beds for 400 million years. Geologists have known about the Marcellus shale for a century. The Millennium pipeline has been in the works for years. So why do gas men give us just a few days to sign a lease?

Maybe it's because they don't want us to have a chance to carefully consider what we're signing, or a chance to consult a lawyer. Maybe if we had the time to think about it, they know we'd demand changes that protect the market value of our property and give us a bigger piece of the pie.

2. THE LAST CHANCE

Right now the gas companies are trying to sign up land right around the Millennium pipeline, but they tell us that if we don't fall in line, they'll be pulling out. Are we really supposed to believe that the gas companies will abandon this gas rich area right next to the pipeline?

3. THE LOWER OFFER

One day they offer us \$2,500 an acre, the next day it's \$2,000. What happened? Did the price of gas go down? No, of course not, but the gas men have created fear. We're supposed to be so afraid of losing that extra \$500 that we'll sign any lease, even a bad one, if only they'll put that money back on the table.

4. THEY TELL US "YOU'LL BE RICH!"

'Sign the lease right now and you'll be rich! You'll be getting checks for thousands of dollars a month. You'll be a millionaire in no time.'

That's what they say, but is it true? Have any of us been shown proof of what the average landowner can expect to make on a gas shale lease? And does the lease they want us to sign even give us the right to audit the amount of gas that's pumped out of the ground?

They never tell us about all the lawsuits brought by property owners who feel they've been cheated out of royalties by gas companies. In West Virginia, landowners were recently awarded 400 million dollars in a suit brought against Columbia Natural Resources, a company bought out by Chesapeake Energy.

Somebody might get rich off the gas under our land, but will it be us?

5. THEY TELL US "YOU'LL BE POOR"

'If you don't sign a lease right now, there might not be any leases tomorrow. Someone might drill a dry well and that would be the end of the Marcellus gas play.'

Are we really supposed to believe that they're building a giant pipeline and spending tens of millions of dollars on gas leases but don't know if there's gas here? Maybe they also have a bridge they want to sell us.

6. ALL LEASES ARE THE SAME

This is the biggest lie of all. Every part of a gas lease can be negotiated. There are good leases and bad leases. A good lease can protect our health, our property and the environment. A bad lease can give gas companies unfettered access to our land forever, and never earn us a single penny beyond the signup bonus. We want their money, but the gas companies want our gas and they'll do whatever it takes to get it— even if that means signing a lease that's good for us too.

Paid for by Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy, a non-profit grassroots community group. For more information, to become a member or to make a donation go to www.catskillcitizens.org

