

ED IRELAND**Executive Director,***Barnett Shale Energy Education Council (BSEEC)***A FUNNEL OF INFORMATION**

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THE BARNETT SHALE ENERGY EDUCATION COUNCIL EXISTS TO PROVIDE THE PUBLIC FACTS ABOUT NATURAL GAS DRILLING AND PRODUCTION IN NORTH TEXAS.

Fundamentals For The People

For most people, geology is a field that falls somewhere between doing laundry and undergoing root canal on the personal interest scale. But for North Texas residents, geology has become the hot topic of the day.

The reason is not hard to find. The Barnett Shale, possibly the largest onshore natural gas field in the United States and containing an estimated 39 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, lies right underneath one of the most populated and vibrant metropolitan areas in the nation.

The Barnett Shale and the new technologies that are enabling energy companies to extract the clean-burning energy source in urban environments have made the region's more than 6 million residents stakeholders in one of the most remarkable energy finds in the nation's history.

But like stakeholders in any endeavor, these residents require fact-based information. Enter the Barnett Shale Energy Education Council (BSEEC), a non-profit education foundation created in 2006 as a community resource for public information about gas drilling and production in North Texas.

In late 2007, the BSEEC made a huge step forward in meeting its mandate by launching a new website at www.bseec.org, providing area residents with a central information repository on issues ranging from environmental concerns to gas leases.

But the BSEEC is far from finished with its efforts, according to the group's Executive Director, Ed Ireland.

"Our goal is to provide the community a central point of factual information about everything related to the Barnett Shale as gas exploration and production evolve through the years," Ireland said. The website is just the first step in that effort, he added, noting the group recently published two brochures that are being distributed at libraries in Tarrant County and at community centers in Fort Worth. The brochures, written in both English and Spanish, cover

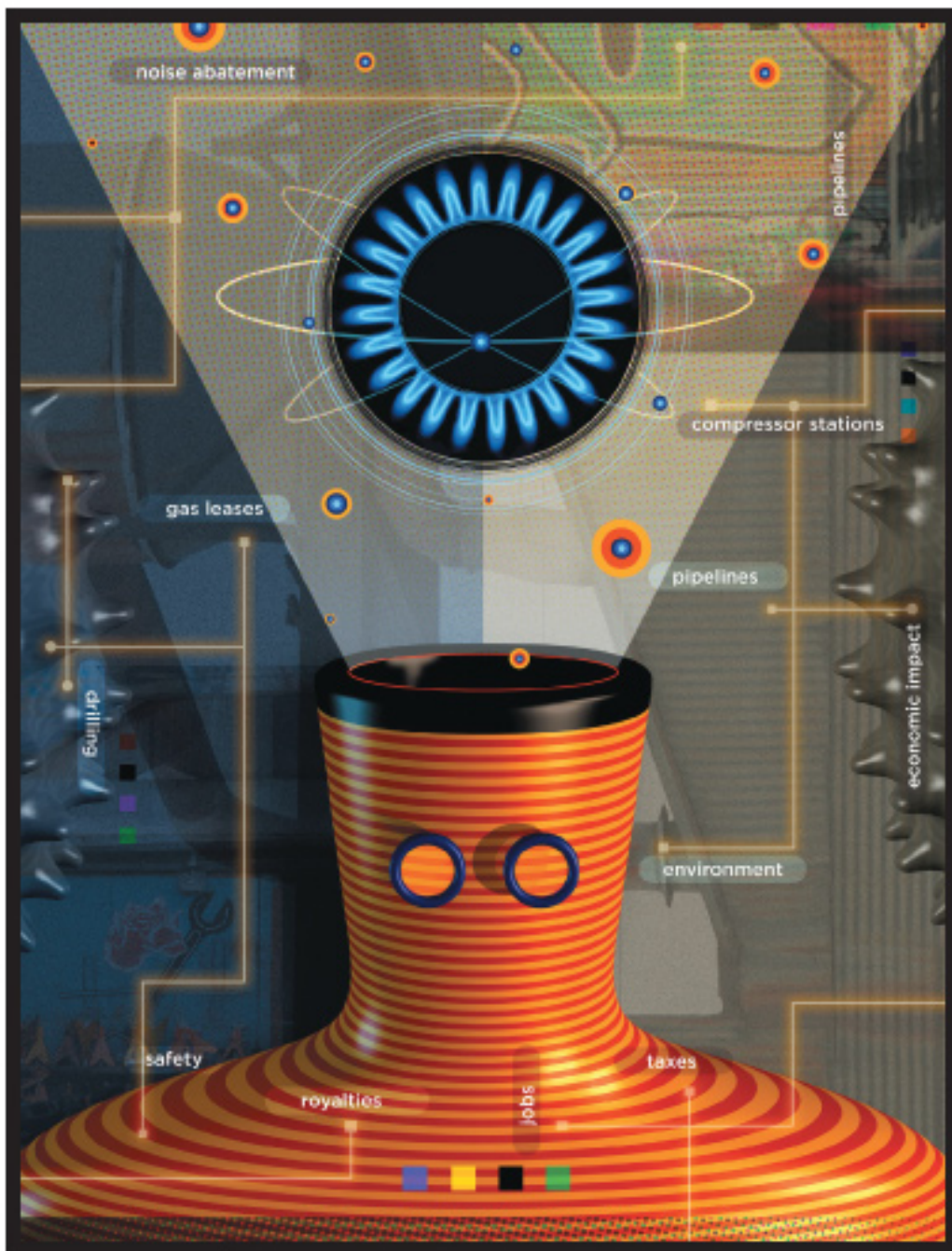


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The Barnett Shale Energy Education Council (BSEEC) is a community resource that provides information to the public about gas drilling and production in the Barnett Shale region in North Texas.



Founding members of the BSEEC include: Chesapeake Energy Corp., Chief Oil & Gas LLC, Dale Resources LLC, Devon Energy Corp., EnCana Corp., EOG Resources Inc., Four Sevens Resources, and XTO Energy Inc. Three additional companies have since joined, including Forest Oil Corp., Axia Land Services and Crosstex Energy Services.

In coming together to provide the much-needed information, BSEEC members also developed a set of best practices for dealing with the public, and each other, on key issues related to Barnett Shale drilling. All companies must agree to follow a set of core principles and ethical business practices as a precondition for membership in the organization.

Ireland said one goal for the group is to make membership a coveted privilege, a sort of Good Housekeeping seal of approval.

Recognizing the expected decades-long economic impact of the Barnett Shale on the regional economy, the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce is actively backing the BSEEC, serving as an advisor as well as providing office space and administrative support.

"The Barnett Shale will be one of the leading economic drivers for the local economy for many years to come," Chamber President Bill Thornton said.

Among other things, the chamber organized two highly successful Barnett Shale expositions to help educate the general public.

Now Ireland said the group's main goal is simply to make sure "the public knows we're here," adding that he keeps up a steady community presence. In addition to speaking before neighborhood groups several times a week, he also writes monthly articles that appear in newspapers throughout the area. The work, he said, is paying off.

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One indirect but important benefit of the group's role is that, as an information clearinghouse, the BSEEC has a finger on the community's pulse, Ireland said. "We're on the front line of understanding the problems, concerns and questions members of the community have," he said. "All the companies working the Barnett Shale have a keen interest in making sure the community approves of their activities. In the process of providing information, we're also able to gain a better understanding of the community's concerns." ❖

the two hottest topics of the moment, leasing and drilling. Ireland said the group is looking at developing more brochures as the community's informational needs shift. For example, he said citizens increasingly have questions about pipelines and compressor stations.

"People have legitimate questions about those sorts of things," Ireland said. "Our job of educating the public is evolving and will continue to evolve as the general population becomes more knowledgeable about the Barnett Shale."

The BSEEC is the brainchild of Fort Worth Mayor Mike Moncrief, who was concerned about a growing information gap between the natural gas industry and area residents. He approached industry leaders and urged them to develop a mechanism for providing residents with "timely, consistent, accurate and complete information."