12/26/08 - Gas Leak Evacuates Roulette Homes

Contributed by http://www.bradfordera.com/articles/2008/12/27/news/doc49558966e561e7391
Monday, 29 December 2008

News:
Some Roulette homes were evacuated Wednesday night when natural gas from a new Marcellus Shale well started leaking in heavy concentrations. At just after 6 p.m., Route 6 was closed from the eastbound Roulette Main Street exit to the Fishing Creek exit. Roulette firefighters had to access the wells with four-wheel-drive vehicles to turn off the valves. The leak was eventually stopped. Guardian Exploration of Texas owns the wells, but they have an office in Shinglehouse and are investigating.

According to Roulette Fire Chief Ray Kulp, a resident called in a gas leak from one of the Marcellus Shale wells. The fire department responded and closed down Route 6 until Guardian Exploration of Texas and PPL employees could reach the scene and shut down the wells and contain the gas leak.

Firefighters also went door-to-door to make sure residents weren't bothered by the gas leak. However, the wind was blowing away from town and dissipating the gas.

Total time on-scene was less than two hours, according to Kulp.

The Marcellus Shale wells near Roulette were the first three horizontal wells drilled by Pennsylvania General Energy, a Warren-based company. The trio were drilled earlier this year. Other horizontal wells have been drilled in Norwich Township in McKean County.

The wells tap into natural gas at depths of 5,000 to 7,000 feet, with directional drilling and water under high pressure to fracture the shale, letting the gas escape. The Marcellus Shale covers much of Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio and West Virginia.