



Two months ago, U.S. EPA wrote nine major natural gas drilling companies a letter. It politely asked the recipients to voluntarily tell agency officials the secret brew of chemicals they use to "frack" gas from the shale deposits.

EPA wasn't even planning to make the ingredient list public, a policy the industry is fighting tooth-and-nail in Congress. Instead, it just wanted the information to help with a crucial first-ever federal study of the health and safety risks of hydraulic fracturing, a drilling technique that has already ruined water and air quality in towns across the country and has proceeded unregulated thanks to the Dick Cheney-pushed "Halliburton loophole" passed in 2005.

In case anyone's memory fails them, Cheney himself is a former Halliburton executive. Today, EPA announced that 8 of the 9 companies complied with the request. You can take a wild guess which one refused.

EPA now issued a subpoena to Halliburton to compel the information from them, since it has a tight legal deadline to provide the initial results by the end of 2012, and that will be sort of hard to meet without knowing the chemicals they are studying.

Halliburton's antics do not stop at the federal level.

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