



**For immediate release:**  
March 8, 2011

**For more information contact:**  
Ashley Lauth; 701.212.3871; [ashley@drcinfo.com](mailto:ashley@drcinfo.com)

## Dakota Resource Council Issue Statement on Oil Well Fire *DRC addresses issues on land and human health safety*

**Bismarck---** Dakota Resource Council released a statement today on the two oil-related fires in Burke County and at Arnegard that have occurred since March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Dakota Resource Council (DRC) maintains that oil and gas development must be safe and responsible and that our state government and agencies must protect people and land of North Dakota. The heart of North Dakota will always be the land and the people who work the land come first.

The fires in Burke County and at Arnegard point to major shortcomings in thorough safety procedures and enforcement of regulations. In order to protect the land and landowners, there must be adequate enforcement, regulation, and oversight especially of precautionary measures. DRC believes in order to safeguard North Dakotans and the land they live on, there must be sufficient means to enact rules designed to protect them.

Furthermore, the fire in Arnegard is at a hydraulic fracturing site, and involves an uncontrollable flow of hydrocarbon. Hence, the fire is dangerous not only because it is uncontrollable, but because it involves a highly toxic chemical to humans and those chemicals can find their way into the air. It is worth noting that hydraulic fracturing is a system, which not only includes injection, but storage, transport, pipelines, tanks, treatment, venting, etc. The potential hazards are not limited to surface and subsurface water (including drinking water); this is a major threat for air quality. One of the main problems with any chemicals used in fracking is air volatilization, or off-gassing.

Some of the chemicals found to be in hydraulic fracturing fluid are well-known highly toxic carcinogens. Chemicals including **aromatic hydrocarbons such as benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylene**, methylecyclo-hexane, naphthalene, phenol, **thermogenic methane, tris 2-butoxyethanol phosphate (2 BE-P), diesel fuel**, ethane, propanes, butanes, pentanes, hexanes, heptanes, and octanes.

Currently, it is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain specific information about a product's chemical ingredients, and the proportions or combinations of these chemicals present. It is difficult, as well, to find out what volumes of chemicals are being used during various oil and gas drilling, completion and production operations. Without such information, not only are communities and citizens kept in the dark about potential health impacts, but also the regulatory agencies cannot know what chemicals to sample for, in the event of a spill or release.

DRC maintains that the constituents of hydraulic fracturing fluid should be disclosed in the name of public and agricultural health. Authoritative studies based on scientific evidence have not conclusively ruled on the hazards of hydraulic fracturing, and the chemical contents of hydraulic fracturing fluid crucial to producing scientific studies are not disclosed.

*Dakota Resource Council Dakota Resource Council is a nonprofit, grassroots activist organization. The mission of DRC is to form enduring, democratic local groups that empower people to influence decision-making processes that affect their lives. DRC works to protect North Dakota's land, air, water, rural communities and agricultural economy.*

***For interviews and more information, please contact Ashley Lauth at 701.212.3871 or at [ashley@drcinfo.com](mailto:ashley@drcinfo.com)***