

ALBERTA BY NUMBERS

Compiled by Joe Wilderson

Of 1,200 Albertans surveyed, approval ratings for industries, per cent:
agriculture, 57 [highest]; oil and gas, 50 [second highest]

Media cited as primary source of information by surveyed Albertans living in and near oil and gas producing regions, per cent: newspapers, 61; word of mouth, 48; television, 23; radio, 20; flyers/newsletters, 15

Number of Canadian farmers who will turn 65 in next decade: 120,000

Value of farm assets that will change hands as result: \$50-billion (\$9-million each day)

Percentage of farmers who have a farm succession plan in writing: 2-4

Length of new fibre-optic cable branching south from existing Calgary/Banff line into K-Country for G8 summit: 40 km; depth to which line is buried in the ground: 1 m;

Duration of installation work: 5 weeks; Number of personnel: 15-25

Number of gophers “all dressed” in Gopher Hole Museum & Gift Shop at Torrington: 54

Approximate average volume of methane emitted daily by one cow: 280 litres

Alberta’s cattle population in 2000: 5,749,000

Number of living organisms in a teaspoon of fertile soil: 9 billion

Percentage of Canada’s total natural gas production that is sour: 30

Alberta’s percentage share of Canada’s total sour gas production: 85

Number of definitive statistics available as to amount of H₂S

(hydrogen sulphide, otherwise known as sour gas) emitted by sour gas industry

“due to small leakages and occasional accidents and equipment failures

because [such] releases are small and random events”: 0

Number of Alberta oil patch workers who died in sour gas incidents from 1979-88: 23; 1989-98: 3

Minimum distance sour gas facility must be set back

from individual permanent dwellings: 0.1 km

from urban centre or public facility: 0.5-1.5 km

Radius within which residents must be consulted for new sweet gas facility: 0.5km

for new sour facility: 1.5km

Radius for disclosure/notification only: sweet: 1.5 km; sour: 2 km

Concentration of H₂S in parts per million at which rotten-egg odour is detectable: 0.01-0.3

that can have health effects in sensitive individuals: 1

that causes nausea, tearing, headaches, sleeplessness after prolonged exposure: 1-10

that causes lung irritation and eye damage: 20

that causes olfactory paralysis: 100

that may be deadly: 750

that causes instantaneous death: 1,000

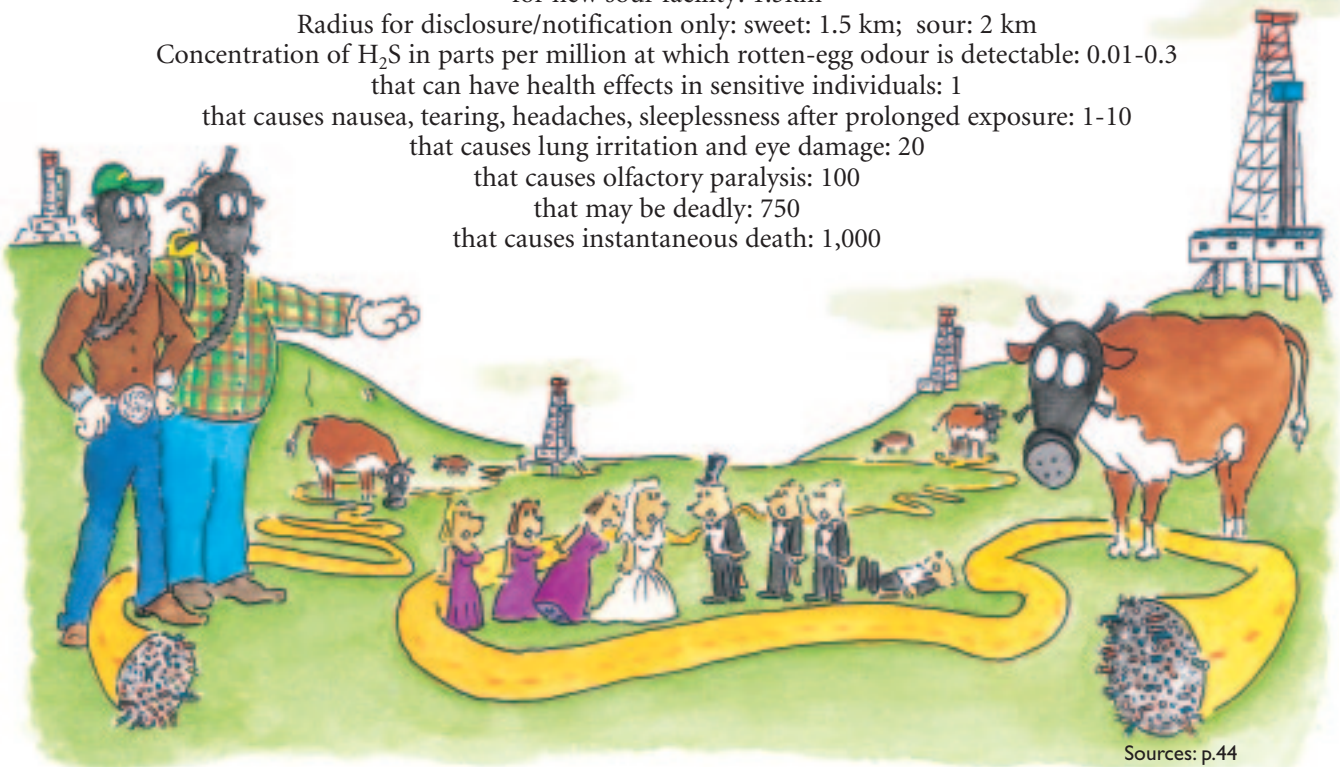


Illustration: MARK MURIAS