Energy has long served as a significant economic driver in Texas. For the past decade Fort Worth has been the focal point for energy production through natural gas exploration and drilling in the Barnett Shale. Sitting atop one of the largest natural gas resources in the nation, Fort Worth is the ideal location for gas drillers, pipeline investments and related operations.

The Barnett Shale currently covers over 5,000 square miles in 24 North Texas counties, including Tarrant, Wise, Denton and Johnson. These counties already have more than 16,000 producing wells in place, with thousands more permitted for future drilling; at any point, there are dozens of rigs in operation.

**The Barnett Shale: A significant economic driver**

Since 2001, this massive area has produced over 10 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, making drilling and related activity a notable economic driver for the region. In 2011, Barnett Shale activity yielded an estimated $11.1 billion economic impact to the region, including 100,268 jobs. The cumulative economic impact of the Barnett Shale since 2001 is estimated at $65.4 billion and nearly 600,000 jobs. The overall economic contribution constitutes about 8.5 percent of the local business complex, and the activity is expected to continue generating economic stimulus for decades to come.
America’s testing ground

In addition to its role as an economic driver, the Barnett Shale is a model for innovation. In fact, the now widely used technologies of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing were introduced in the Barnett Shale in 2002.

Companies further pushed the boundaries by introducing new urban drilling practices related to royalties and leases, community relations and legislative relations in the Barnett Shale. As a result, these practices have been modeled and enhanced in other shale plays across the nation.

Notable Facts:

• Barnett Shale production topped 1.9 trillion cubic feet in 2010.

• Companies operating in the Barnett Shale have donated substantial sums to various local entities. In 2010, these companies contributed at least $9 million to local organizations in addition to providing financial and in-kind gifts to schools and scholarships.

• Barnett Shale activity benefits the entire State of Texas. From 2001 – 2011, the statewide economic impact of natural gas drilling and related activity in the Barnett Shale included $80.7 billion in output and 710,319 person-years of employment.

• Approximately 38.5 percent of the growth in the Fort Worth region’s economy from 2001 – 2011 has been the result of Barnett Shale activity. The overall economic contribution now constitutes about 8.5 percent of the local business complex.

Workforce

The workforce in North Texas represents one of the most educated talent pools in the country. The region benefits from more than 60 colleges and universities in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, with a combined enrollment exceeding 325,000 students, that collectively graduate more than 35,000 students annually. There are more than 850,000 individuals with a bachelor’s degree and nearly 400,000 with a graduate or professional degree in the North Texas region.*

*Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2011

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