

UCG – A Timeline Of Failure

1868 – UCG first proposed as a theory.

1930s – Soviet Union: Several trials all abandoned.

1982-1985 – Thulin, Belgium: Underground fire proved unstable. Project abandoned.

1976 – Hoe Creel, Wyoming, USA: Groundwater and surface soils contaminated with benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylene



Rocky Mountain Plant Wyoming

1988 – Rocky Mountain, Wyoming USA: Benzene levels in ground water rose to an alarming level, endangering human and animal life. **Project abandoned.**

1997 – El Tremedal, Spain: Underground explosion blew back to the surface, rupturing the surface plant and covering the surrounding area with a toxic mixture of coal tars and phenolic liquor. **Project abandoned**

2010 – Cougar Energy plant at Kingaroy, Queensland, Australia: Groundwater contaminated with toxic and carcinogenic by-products. **Project abandoned.**

2014 – Chinchilla, Queensland, Australia: Project in operation for five days when well exploded. Benzene and toluene detected in groundwater and in the fat of grazing animals. Queensland government ordered plant to shut down. **Project abandoned**

Some of the dangerous chemicals produced in UCG include:

Benzene: Can Cause leukaemia, damage blood cells and the nervous system.

Ethylbenzene: Can cause respiratory problems and damage the nervous system.

Toluene: Can damage the liver, brain, kidneys and developing embryo.

Xylen: Can damage liver, kidneys and nervous system.

Left to Right: David Spence, Alan Cummings and Maureen James



Dawdon Residents Say No to UCG

The depths of anger felt by coalfield residents at the prospect of underground coal gasification (UCG) blighting the North East Coast was loudly demonstrated at a protest meeting held in Dawdon Miners' Welfare on September 25.

The meeting was opened by DMA Chairman, Alan Cummings, who explained that Durham Miners were totally opposed to the underground gasification of offshore coal reserves on the North East Coast. The DMA, he told the meeting, had commissioned a feasibility survey and proved that the reserves off Wearmouth and Amble in Northumberland could be mined by driving drifts into the coal. 'These reserves,' he said, 'should be mined by miners.'

David Spence, an activist from Teesside, gave an illustrated presentation of the dangers of UCG and the devastation it had caused wherever it had been attempted. He said that people should not rely on the Friends of the Earth or Greenpeace to oppose UCG. 'We have to do it ourselves', he said. 'We have to get the posters printed and stickers made to let others know of the danger the area is facing.'

A lively discussion followed and many residents gave vent to their fears, expressing determined opposition to the proposed gasification.

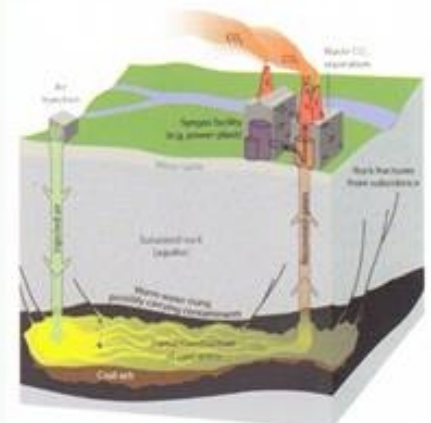
Maureen James said that she had done a lot of research into UCG and the pollution it had caused wherever it had been tried. She said that in the USA people been moved out of their

homes due to pollution and grazing animals had been found dead in the fields. She said: 'I am afraid, very afraid and I won't let this happen as long as I have breath in my body.'

Sharon Orchard, from Easington Action Group, made a passionate plea for everyone to band together and make sure that UCG never happens on the North East Coast. She warned: 'If we don't do anything now, it will effect our children, our grand children and our great grandchildren.'

'Down in London they think we're just northerners but we're not – we're valuable people and valuable communities. We have to prove that we're a force to be reckoned with. We have to fight to protect our communities, our homes, our water table, our vegetation.'

Maureen James concurred: 'What London forgets is that we are colliery women, we're colliery wives, we're miners wives, we're miners families. Thatcher tried to destroy our resolve and failed and these are not going to do it either.'



Right: Diagram of typical UCG plant