

# Six Nations gas wells pose 'explosive risk'

by Paul Baswick

SIX NATIONS-Seven improperly abandoned gas wells on Six Nations pose an immediate explosive risk to the health and safety of residents living nearby.

That discovery follows a recent study of Six Nations gas wells which was presented to Six Nations band council last week by Clynt King, environmental coordinator with the Six Nations Environmental Management Committee.

The purpose of the study, which began in August 1998 and was finalized in November 1999, was to plot the locations of gas wells on the reserve, some of which were abandoned nearly 80 years ago, and to inspect the wells on-site for safety hazards. Recent field inspections related to the study have found that six unplugged natural gas wells are leaking methane gas at explosive levels, while one of the wells and a seventh well which was plugged in 1959 are leaking hydro-

gen sulfide at very high concentrations.

"If you're standing very close to one of these wells and light a cigarette or throw a match right near the well head, it would probably blow up," says King.

Three of the wells are located just south of Second Line east of Cayuga Road, while the others are spread out between the northeast corner of Third Line and Cayuga Road, the south side of Fourth Line east of Cayuga Road, Fifth Line east of Tuscarora Road, and on the east side of Cayuga Road north of Fifth Line.

The wells, says King, could present potentially serious health risks for anyone who gets close enough to breathe in the gases for an extended period of time.

Methane isn't good to breathe in, that's for sure. Hydrogen sulfide is also classified as a toxic gas, so that presents a problem too. That

*Continued on page 2*