

Uranium mining prospect worries neighbors

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A company wanting to mine for uranium in south Texas said a strike would be an alternative fuel dream while opponents said it's an environmental nightmare.

Uranium Energy Corp. is seeking operation permits to explore for uranium that the company said would meet the area's energy needs for 4,000 years, KENS-TV, San Antonio, said. The company leased about 2,000 acres of open land and is drilling more than 60 test wells in search of uranium.

Company officials said that, drinking water is safe for the area around San Antonio, despite drilling through the Gulf Coast Aquifer to reach the uranium below.

Meanwhile, Craig and Luann Dunderstadt are testing their wells, creating a baseline of what's in the water. The move, they said, is their insurance against possible contamination.

"If they do decide to mine over there, we won't be able to live here. I would not feel safe living here," Luann Dunderstadt told KENS-TV.

The mining process uses water to release uranium from its deposits, drawing it to the surface for collection. Wastes, such as arsenic, radium and other heavy metals, are pumped to an underground storage area.

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