Shale Gas Protest Turns Violent

REXTON, New Brunswick (AP) — Canadian police said that they arrested at least 40 people Thursday in eastern New Brunswick at a violent protest over shale gas development. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police said the people were arrested for firearms violations, threats, intimidation, mischief and violating a court-ordered injunction near Rexton. "The RCMP has worked diligently with all parties involved in hopes for a peaceful resolution. Those efforts have not been successful," Constable Jullie Rogers-Marsh said. "Tensions were rising, and serious criminal acts are being committed."

The RCMP said at least five of their vehicles were destroyed after they were set on fire, Molotov cocktails were thrown at officers, and at least one shot was fired by someone who isn't a police officer. Police began enforcing an injunction Thursday where energy company SWN Resources stores exploration equipment. SWN Resources is owned by Houston-based Southwestern Energy. The protesters, who include aboriginals, want SWN Resources to stop seismic testing and leave the province.

Opponents of the shale gas sector say the process used to extract the shale gas — hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking — could pollute drinking water. Proponents of the industry say such concerns are overblown and don't take into account the possibility of replacing coal and oil with cleaner burning natural gas. Robert Levi, a councillor with the Elsipogtog First Nation, said he went to the protest site in Rexton early Thursday after hearing the RCMP had moved in to begin enforcing the injunction against the protesters.

Levi said police pepper-sprayed dozens of people after 9:30 a.m. when he arrived with the chief and council. "The chief was manhandled a little bit and all hell broke loose," he said.

Source URL (retrieved on *10/09/2015 - 10:03am*):
http://www.chem.info/news/2013/10/shale-gas-protest-turns-violent