PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tour promoting awareness of realities in natural gas industry

“ A dialogue opening up new prospects for Quebec "

Mario Levesque, President AFSPG

Calgary, July 18, 2012 – Today a group of twelve Quebecers end a three-day tour in Alberta; an initiative by the Oil and Gas Services Association of Quebec (OGSAQ).

"This tour allowed participants to experience first-hand the quality of the relationship that has developed between farmers and Alberta’s natural gas industry. It was an opportunity to demystify the process of hydraulic fracturing and to demonstrate how, under an appropriate regulatory environment, the industry acts in a safe and environmentally-friendly way." said Mario Levesque, President AFSPG.

Alberta stood out as a destination for those Quebecers seeking answers to their questions about the gas industry. It produces 73% of the energy of the country and contains 64% of Canada's natural gas reserves. Since the 1950s, 171,000 wells have been subjected to the process of hydraulic fracturing. Since 2008, 3,300 horizontal wells with multi-stage hydraulic fracturing have been drilled.

Alberta’s knowledge is a model for Quebec. The Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB), a responsible regulation agency, and the Surface Rights Board (SRB), which ensures the protection of rights of property owners, have developed a world-class expertise. Their impartiality, transparency and timeliness promote constructive dialogue between all stakeholders.

"I leave here with a renewed conviction that it is possible to develop the gas industry while respecting local communities, and in particular the farming community. I understand very well, however, the apprehensions of many Quebecers. Our visit in western Canada has certainly added to our knowledge, but this experience cannot replace the important ongoing work of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Committee (SEA) of oil and gas development. It does however allow us to confirm the quality of the recent recommendations by a group of reputable and independent UK experts who said that if governments make the right choices, hydraulic fracturing is safe." said Mr. Lévesque.

"We have seen with our own eyes that there exists an alternative to confrontation and that there are people embracing this alternative. I invite Quebecers to take advantage of the 15 months between now and the completion of SEA’s study to engage in constructive dialogue with all the stakeholders. I invite them to take inspiration from our experience here. We have seen that the industry is not insensitive. Does it not continually invest itself in innovation and ways to respond to the legitimate demands of citizens?” concluded Mr. Lévesque.

The OGSAQ would like to thank all the Albertans who welcomed the Quebec visitors, in particular the men and women who graciously invited us onto their land. Furthermore, we would like to thank our partner PSAC as well the representatives of the organizations who gave their time to meet and discuss with our group.

Source:

Alberta:
Anela Dido:
Tel: 403-777-1185

In Quebec:
Lorelle Binnion:
Tel 514-284-1234