

# Pa. governor says drilling opponents are 'unreasoning'

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**PHILADELPHIA** — Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett on Thursday attacked anti-drilling activists as the "unreasoning opposition" who accept that the nation can land a space vehicle on Mars but don't believe energy companies can safely harvest gas a mile under the earth's surface.

Corbett, speaking at a Marcellus Shale industry conference, touted the economic benefits of shale-gas development and hailed drillers as the "tip of the spear" of a new industrial revolution.

"After all the predictions of disaster and the fearful warnings from

people with no understanding of the industry, Pennsylvania is reaping a bounty," said the Republican governor.

As Corbett spoke, a few hundred anti-drilling activists protested outside the Pennsylvania Convention Center. Opponents portray shale-gas drilling and hydraulic fracturing — the technique that allows drillers to extract natural gas from shale deposits deep underground — as bad for the environment and a danger to public health.

"Please open your eyes. We're destroying the precious resources that God has provided us with to sustain life," said protester Tammy Manning of Franklin Forks,

Pa., who has filed a lawsuit alleging a gas driller contaminated her water well. The driller denies responsibility.

The second annual Shale Gas Insight conference drew about 1,600 people at a time of tremendous change for the drilling industry.

Companies are shifting rigs to drill for natural gas liquids and oil in the face of historically low natural gas prices. They're adjusting to a major overhaul of state drilling regulations and recently paid a first-ever state impact fee of more than \$200 million.

And they are still struggling to gain wide acceptance from a skeptical public.