



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Managing California's Working Lands

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

801 K STREET • MS 24-07 • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

PHONE 916 / 323-1886 • FAX 916 / 323-1887 • TDD 916 / 324-2555 • WEB SITE conservation.ca.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NR#2014-09

October 9, 2014

Contact: Ed Wilson (916) 323-1886

Don Drysdale

Krista Watson

CA. DEPT. OF CONSERVATION RELEASES LATEST VERSION OF OIL AND GAS WELL STIMULATION REGULATIONS *15-Day Public Comment Period Begins*

SACRAMENTO – The California Department of Conservation (DOC) has released its latest version of proposed regulations for well stimulation treatments used in oil and gas production, including hydraulic fracturing. The department has provided public notice that the second revised version is available for review on its website, starting a 15-day comment period that closes October 24. If finalized, this version of the regulations will go into effect next year.

“We made significant changes between the first and second versions of the proposed regulations after we reviewed tens of thousands of public comments and conducted several public hearings,” DOC Director Mark Nechodom said. “This latest revision has some technical refinements, but we believe the basic structure of the regulations is sound and comprehensive.

“We believe these regulations will protect the environment and public health and safety and also give the oil and gas industry clear direction for the use of well stimulation going forward.”

The text of the revised proposed regulations can be found on DOC’s website, www.conservation.ca.gov. Comments regarding the proposed regulations can be submitted via email to DOGRRRegulations@conservation.ca.gov ; via FAX to (916) 324-0948; or via regular mail to the DOC’s Office of Governmental and Environmental Relations, 801 K Street MS 24-02, 95814, ATTN: Well Stimulation Regulations.

Among the highlights of the revised proposed regulations:

- The timeframe for neighboring parties to request pre-stimulation water quality testing has changed. Previously, that request had to be made within 20 days of notification. Now, the request can be made at any time prior to stimulation. If it’s made within the 20-day window, the operator must make sure that the first sample is taken before the treatment can start. Outside of that timeframe, the neighboring party is responsible

for making arrangements to have a sample taken before the treatment starts. In either case, the operator bears the cost.

- Language was added in the last version requiring operators to report the use of acid and pressure while conducting maintenance to ensure that well stimulation is not the goal. This version will allow operators to submit aggregated information for the very routine operations.

- The use of a more precise model for estimating how far a hydraulic fracture will extend and in what directions has been incorporated.

- The permitting structure has been modified so that operators can simultaneously pursue permits from the Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) and the State Water Board. Previously, a permit from the Board was a prerequisite for a DOGGR permit. However, permits from both agencies are still required before well stimulation operations commence.

- The threshold for reportable seismic activity near a well stimulation operation has been changed from a magnitude 2.0 or greater to a magnitude 2.7 or greater. This change was made to be able to better pinpoint the source of an earthquake given the variable levels of density of the California Integrated Seismic Network, which is being utilized for the seismic monitoring requirement under the proposed regulations. In the event of a magnitude 2.7 earthquake within the vicinity of a well stimulation operation, the operation will be halted and an evaluation will be conducted by DOGGR and the California Geological Survey.

Interim regulations for the use of well stimulation went into place January 1, 2014 and will remain in effect until July 1, 2015, when the final regulations become effective.

Since the interim regulations went into effect, DOGGR has received 991 Well Stimulation Treatment notices and 391 post-well stimulation reports, which must be submitted to the division within 60 days of an operation. Both the notices and fully completed reports are available on the DOGGR website.

###