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## **Independent Review Completed of Oklahoma Corporation Commission Oil and Gas Conservation Division Program Regulating Hydraulic Fracturing of Oil & Gas Wells**

OKLAHOMA CITY--(BUSINESS WIRE)--A targeted review of the Oklahoma program regulating the hydraulic fracturing of oil and gas wells has been completed by a multi-stakeholder group, which has concluded that the program is, overall, well-managed, with certain elements deserving special recognition. The review team also made recommendations for improvement. In particular, the review team expressed concern over funding for the program. The program is run by the Oil and Gas Conservation Division of the Oklahoma Corporation Commission (OCC).

The review was conducted by a seven-person team appointed by the State Review of Oil and Natural Gas Environmental Regulations (STRONGER), a non-profit organization that conducts voluntary state reviews of oil and natural gas environmental regulations. The review team consisted of three core members and four contributing observers representing environmental groups, state regulators, the oil and gas industry and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

"The review team has concluded that the Oklahoma hydraulic fracturing program is, overall, well-managed, professional and meeting its program objectives," said Leslie Savage, Chief Geologist-Oil and Gas Division of the Texas Railroad Commission, who served as chairperson of the review team. "In fact, we believe several aspects of the Oil and Gas Conservation Division and its operations merit special recognition."

The Oklahoma hydraulic fracturing regulatory program was singled out for its operations in the areas of comprehensive regulations to address risks associated with hydraulic fracturing, comprehensive standards for hydraulic fracturing, use of a five-year planning process that included hydraulic fracturing in its program management goals, and the OCC Guardian Guidance document that provides a step-by-step process to assess, clean up if necessary, and close sites that may impact surface or groundwater.

The review team recommended that the state of Oklahoma develop a more stable source of funding for the OCC's Oil and Gas Conservation Division and provide resources to allow the filling of positions and provision of equipment to a level that is sufficient to continue to meet program responsibilities. It also recommended that hydraulic fracturing information be included on the well completion report a producer files with the OCC.

The review team consisted of 3 core members and 4 contributing observers. The requirements are that the core membership consist of 1 member of the environmental community, 1 member from industry, and 1 member from the state regulation sector. In addition to Leslie Savage, the STRONGER review team core members were Wilma Subra, an environmental scientist from Louisiana, and Jim Collins, a petroleum engineer representing the Independent Petroleum Association of America. The contributing observers were Michael Overbay, Regional Ground Water Center Coordinator, United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 6; Harold "Hal" Fitch, Director - Office of Geological Survey, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment; Bud Scott, Director - Oklahoma Chapter of the Sierra Club; and Angie Burckhalter, Vice President of Regulatory Affairs - Oklahoma Independent Petroleum Association.

Copies of the Oklahoma Hydraulic Fracturing Review are available by contacting Michael Nickolaus by email at [mnickolaus@gwpc.org](mailto:mnickolaus@gwpc.org), by phone at (405) 516-4972, or downloading from the STRONGER website at [www.strongerinc.org](http://www.strongerinc.org).

About STRONGER

The name, STRONGER, is an acronym for State Review of Oil and Natural Gas Environmental Regulations. STRONGER was formed in 1999 to reinvigorate and carry forward the state review process begun cooperatively in 1988 by the U.S. Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA) and the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission (IOGCC).

The mission of STRONGER is to educate and provide services for the continuous improvement of regulatory programs and industry practices in order to enhance human health and the environment. STRONGER is a non-profit, multi-stakeholder organization which shares innovative techniques and environmental protection strategies and identifies opportunities for program improvement. The state review process is a non-regulatory program and relies on states to volunteer for reviews.

Notes to Editors:

- The earliest drilling for petroleum in Oklahoma occurred in the early 1900s
- Hydraulic fracturing has been a well completion practice in Oklahoma since the 1950s
- According to OCC there have been no documented instances of hydraulic fracturing affecting groundwater in Oklahoma

## Contacts

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