

RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS

Oil and Gas Division



NOTICE TO OIL AND GAS OPERATORS

Disposal Well Monitoring and Reporting Requirements in the Permian Basin

The Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) will begin adding additional requirements to new disposal well permits in the Permian Basin to assist the agency and industry in monitoring and responding to injection and reservoir conditions that may be conducive to induced seismicity.

The new permit conditions for monitoring and reporting will require certain new disposal wells to be equipped and operated with a bottomhole pressure monitoring gauge. These permit conditions will apply to:

- (1) all new “deep”¹ disposal wells in the Permian Basin², and
- (2) all new “shallow”³ disposal wells in the Permian Basin that are within an area designated by the RRC as a Seismic Response Area (SRA).

The permit language will require the operator of the well to report daily injection data monthly. This will include the following parameters:

- Maximum surface injection pressure
- Average surface injection pressure
- Maximum bottomhole injection pressure
- Average bottomhole injection pressure
- Injection volume
- Maximum injection rate
- Average fluid density

This information will be available to industry, academia, the public and RRC staff via the Bureau of Economic Geology’s (BEG) TexNet Injection Volume Reporting Tool available at <https://injection.texnet.beg.utexas.edu/>.

¹ A “deep” disposal well is generally one that injects fluids into strata below the primary producing formations, which in the Midland Basin is below the top of the Strawn Formation and in the Delaware Basin is below the base of the Wolfcamp Formation. UIC permitting staff can provide more information on the categorization of disposal wells.

² The Permian Basin includes all of RRC Oil and Gas Districts 7C, 8, and 8A.

³ A “shallow” disposal well is generally one that injects fluids into strata above the base of the primary producing formations, which in the Midland Basin is above the top of the Strawn Formation and in the Delaware Basin is above the base of the Wolfcamp Formation. UIC permitting staff can provide more information on the categorization of disposal wells.

Operators would also be required to measure the initial reservoir pressure prior to beginning injection, to conduct periodic fall-off tests to evaluate the average reservoir pressure, and to report this information to the RRC.

On a case-by-case basis RRC staff may determine that these permit conditions are not required for a particular new disposal well application if the reservoir is already adequately monitored in a nearby disposal well.

In addition, all other new disposal well permits in the Permian Basin with a permitted maximum daily injection volume of 5,000 barrels per day or more will include a permit condition requiring the operator to report daily injection volume, surface injection pressure, and fluid density data.

This information will also be available to industry, academia, the public and RRC staff via the BEG's TexNet reporting tool. Operators of existing disposal wells with maximum daily injection volumes of 5,000 barrels per day or more are also encouraged and requested to file this information from November 2019 onward.

RRC staff will also be working with industry to identify other data gathering efforts that will support the study and mitigation of seismic activity in the Permian Basin.

If you have questions on disposal well requirements in areas of seismic activity, please contact RRC's Injection-Storage Permits Unit at 512-463-6792 or uic@rrc.texas.gov.

Please Forward to the Appropriate Section of Your Company