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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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EMNRD's Oil Conservation Division provides operational guidance in response to increased seismic activity

Santa Fe, NM – The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) Oil Conservation Division (OCD) announces new guidelines for operators to prevent, mitigate and reduce seismic activity caused by UIC class II injection disposal wells for produced water and other fluids generated during oil and gas production. The state has recently seen seismic activity increase in the southeast close to the Texas border and in the north-central region, and data suggests that this activity is associated with UIC disposal operations. Today's public notices outline OCD immediate response protocols for UIC disposal well operators to follow, including both reporting and operational requirements, and the next steps the OCD will take if seismic activity continues in a given area.

“The Oil Conservation Division is taking a proactive approach to managing seismic activity tied to oil and gas activity in New Mexico,” said OCD Director Adrienne Sandoval. “While some of the biggest events have occurred over the state line in Texas, the time is now to ensure larger events do not occur in our part of the oil field. Using solid data and working with our stakeholders and state partners, the plan laid out today takes a pragmatic approach to addressing this issue.”

Today's notices lay out the following actions:

- Pending permits will require additional review in the area south of Malaga along the state line (referred to in the notice as County Line Seismic Response Area) where we have seen a number of significant seismic events;
- A statewide seismic response protocol that includes the following:
 - Category 1 reporting and monitoring measures will be required when two magnitude 2.5 events occur within 30 days and within a 10 mile radius: Within 10 miles of the epicenter operators will be required to provide weekly reporting of daily injection volumes and average daily surface pressure, digitally measure injection volume and pressure, provide an analysis identifying the perforated injection interval and formation tops, and share monitor data with OCD when requested. Additional requirements may be added if determined appropriate by the OCD.

- Category 2 goes into effect if one magnitude 3.0+ event occurs: For a magnitude 3+ event operators must follow all protocols of Category 1 plus implement a 50% injection rate reduction within 0-3 miles, and a 25% reduction between 3 – 6 miles. For a 3.5+ event operators must follow all protocols of Category 1 plus shut-in operations at 0 - 3 miles, and implement a 50% rate reduction at 3 – 6 miles, and a 25% rate reduction at 6 – 10 miles.

The OCD has arrived at this course of action after analyzing data provided by our partnership with New Mexico Tech and receiving feedback from the industry. The OCD will continue to monitor the situation and adjust as necessary.

The notice with additional details can be found [here](#).

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The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.

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