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## State, oil and gas industry taking significant steps to reduce seismicity

(April 12, 2016) -- State regulators are taking significant measures to reduce seismicity in Oklahoma and responsibly manage wastewater from the production of oil and natural gas, according to the Oklahoma Oil & Gas Association (OKOGA).

The Oklahoma Corporation Commission, which has constitutional authority over oil and natural gas activity in the state, is following the recommendation of researchers and is continuing to work with operators to significantly reduce the overall disposal of produced water into the area of seismic interest within the Arbuckle formation area to 40 percent below the 2014 total.

“Regulators and researchers have taken several science-based steps to address increased seismicity in Oklahoma, and the state’s oil and gas companies have worked in full cooperation with regulators to address these concerns,” said Chad Warmington, OKOGA president. “Underground wastewater disposal is currently the safest and most cost-effective way to dispose of produced water, so it’s important that regulators find the right balance in addressing seismicity concerns without placing needless barriers to the state’s oil and gas development.”

Since 2014, the governor’s office, the Corporation Commission, industry groups, oil and gas companies and researchers have been working together to develop an understanding of the cause of the seismicity and what actions can be taken to reduce the activity.

In addition to reducing water volumes into the Arbuckle formation, additional actions include:

- Creation of a Coordinating Council on Seismic Activity to share data, developments and proposed actions related to induced seismicity.
- Collaborating with oil and gas companies and the Oklahoma Geological Survey to update Oklahoma’s fault maps to better pinpoint areas where wastewater disposal could contribute to seismic activity.
- Utilizing \$1.4 million from the state emergency fund to increase staff and technology for the Corporation Commission and the Oklahoma Geological Survey.
- Funding the development of a new, modern digital system to collect data on wastewater disposal wells in the state.

With the oil and gas industry responsible for nearly one-third of the state’s economy, Oklahomans understand the industry’s impact on jobs and state revenue, Warmington said.

“Everyone is working together to find answers to this very complex situation,” Warmington said. “Continued funding for research and continuing collaboration among regulators and oil and gas companies are crucial to finding solutions to these events and keeping the oil and gas industry a vital part of Oklahoma’s economy.”