



PRESS RELEASE

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Oil, gas companies study complex issues related to wastewater recycling

(June 16, 2016) Oklahoma's oil and gas companies are actively researching ways to recycle and reuse wastewater and to reduce injection into deep disposal wells, the Oklahoma Oil & Gas Association said Thursday.

OKOGA President Chad Warmington said companies have heard proposals from organizations that have ideas on how to recycle or treat wastewater; however, there are many factors that must be addressed. One of the primary obstacles to recycling in the Mississippian Lime area is the sheer volume of water produced out of the formation.

A forum at the state capitol on Tuesday offered a recycling and crystallization option from one West Virginia company. While the company has had some success treating wastewater produced from the Appalachian Basin, the volumes don't compare to the volumes produced in the Mississippian Lime, Warmington said.

"There are many, many factors that must be taken into consideration for recycling of this scale," Warmington said.

Warmington points out that oil and gas companies already recycle and reuse water where it is geographically and economically feasible. Gov. Mary Fallin has also formed the Water for 2060 Produced Water Working Group to discuss opportunities and challenges to treating produced water for beneficial uses and in particular how water produced from oil and gas activities can be reused.

"Simplistic explanations from politicians about how easy it would be to recycle large volumes of wastewater don't take into account all the components of recycling, which include geography, supply and demand, storage and handling, technology and economics," Warmington said. "These components are constantly top of mind to oil and gas companies."

Warmington said a number of regulatory hurdles must be addressed as well to deal with storage and handling and ownership of the wastewater.

Oklahoma oil and gas companies are focusing future development in the state in the SCOOP and STACK plays in the west and south central parts of the state, Warmington said. These areas do not produce the large volumes of wastewater that are produced in the Mississippian Lime formation in the north and central parts of the state. The Oklahoma Corporation Commission and oil and gas companies have cut wastewater disposal by 1 million barrels a day, which is a 40-percent reduction, across 11,000 square miles in north and north central Oklahoma.

"The oil and gas industry is leading the ongoing research to reduce the amount of wastewater injected into disposal wells," Warmington said. "We're optimistic solutions will be found, and we will continue to address the issues connected to reusing, recycling and treating wastewater."