



RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS NEWS RELEASE - JULY 29, 2008

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Commissioner

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Chairman

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COMMISSIONERS APPROVE OF DEVON WATER RECYCLING PROJECT FOR THE BARNETT SHALE

AUSTIN — As part of the Railroad Commission's continuing efforts to encourage industry to conserve and minimize the use of fresh water in a region centered around Fort Worth, Commissioners recently approved a water recycling project proposed by Devon Energy—the largest natural gas producer in the Barnett Shale.

The Commissioners' approval authorizes Devon to proceed with its third pilot program to treat and reuse frac fluid. Frac fluid is the fluid that flows back after the Barnett Shale formation is fractured to release trapped natural gas.

As a result of its water recycling efforts, Devon is the industry leader in water recycling and now uses recycled frac water at one out of every 10 frac jobs in its Barnett Shale operations. Devon has nine water distillation recycling units operating at four locations. These units recycle 78 percent of frac flow back fluid and produce 588,888 gallons of distilled water each day.

Devon's latest pilot program is one of three active water recycling pilot programs being overseen by the Railroad Commission—the state's energy regulator.

Devon will contract with Ecosphere Technologies of Stuart, Fla. to operate the pilot project in Johnson County. The project will use a pre-treatment process to remove waste constituents before the water is run through a series of membranes to remove salts. The process will also treat produced water that is released from the shale with natural gas. The recycled water will then be reused to hydraulically fracture the Barnett Shale formation. The water treatment system is projected to produce 75 percent reusable fracture fluid and 25 percent high concentrate and solids. The concentrate will be used as a drilling fluid or disposed of in an authorized facility.

Chairman Michael L. Williams said, "The industry's Barnett Shale water usage is a small portion – less than one percent – of all water consumption in the region, and the Commission has a history of approving innovative projects that could reduce the industry's water usage. I appreciate those companies that are proactive in researching ways to recycle and reuse frac water, as Devon is doing."

Commissioner Victor Carrillo said, "Advanced drilling and fracturing technology has been critical to making the Barnett Shale one of the nation's top natural gas fields. However, fresh water used to fracture the shale becomes a waste product when it picks up salt, metals and hydrocarbons in the formation. Oil and gas field waste reduction is a priority at the Commission, and I commend Devon and other operators who continue to seek ways to reduce frac fluid and produced water waste."

Commissioner Elizabeth Ames Jones said, "The process being tested in this unique pilot program will use a low-energy and low-cost, pre-treatment system to remove most of the contaminants before the water is filtered through membranes. Innovations like this system will help the oil and gas industry to find economical ways to transform a waste product into a reusable fluid."

Brad Foster, vice president and general manager of Devon's central division said, "The Railroad Commission has been a great partner in our effort to develop ways to conserve water in North Texas. We are pleased with our success so far, but we believe there are opportunities to conserve even more water through new technologies such as the Ecosphere process."

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