



**OERB** FACT SHEET

# Hydraulic Fracturing - Oklahoma Regulations



The Corporation Commission is the agency responsible for the regulation of oil and natural gas drilling and production, pipeline safety, petroleum storage tanks and filling stations, public utilities, trucking and railroad crossings. Through the Oil and Gas Conservation Division of the OCC, oil and gas well drilling is regulated in a manner that prevents waste, safeguards mineral property rights, protects the environment and ensures public safety.

- Well operators work with Corporation Commission inspectors during the drilling process to comply with state regulations governing the oil and natural gas production process.
- Operators must also comply with federal requirements under the Occupational Safety and Health Administration; the Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act; and the Toxic Substances Control Act that contain record keeping and reporting rules.
- These regulations ensure all chemicals used in the extraction process are properly handled and stored, and that all workers and first-responders are made aware of the substances they handle.
- The OCC provides more than 35 rules regarding the management of hydraulic fracturing.
- These rules prohibit pollution of any surface or subsurface fresh water.
- The rules provide minimum well construction standards and casing and cementing procedures to accommodate anticipated pressures in all drilling, completion, and production operations, including hydraulic fracturing.
- Oil field grade steel casing is a requirement for surface casing and for additional casing strings.
- Minimum footages for cementing casing are specified in the OCC's rules to protect fresh water supplies.
- OCC inspectors must be given 24 hours notice in advance of cementing so they may witness the activity. Cement bond logs are acceptable when an inspector is not available.
- Other rules govern the storage of flowback fluids used for the hydraulic fracturing process.
- The majority of this fluid is disposed of by injecting it into a disposal well, often after it has been recycled numerous times in a fracturing job. Under OCC regulations, no produced waters or flowback fluid is ever discharged to surface waters in the state of Oklahoma.
- The OCC also has numerous written rules for incident and accident reporting.
- At any time, the OCC can obtain information on the chemicals used in the hydraulic fracturing process. This rule has been implemented during incident investigations.
- Oklahoma's regulation program has been praised on a national level for its success and thoroughness.

(For an overview of the OCC's rules and regulations, visit <http://www.occeweb.com/rules/rulestxt.htm>)