

Underground CO₂ storage study to begin

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The University of Texas has received a \$38 million subcontract to conduct the first U.S. long-term study of underground carbon dioxide storage.

The university's Bureau of Economic Geology said the 10-year project is designed to build public assurance about the use of underground carbon sequestration to reduce atmospheric emissions.

The project is a phase III research program, funded by the National Energy Technology Laboratory of the U.S. Department of Energy.

The project will focus on the feasibility of injecting large volumes of CO₂ at high rates into deep brine reservoirs. Officials said key issues will include estimating the CO₂ storage capacity of brine reservoirs, understanding the effects of injection pressure and developing methods for documenting retention of CO₂ in the injection zone.

Beginning this fall, the project will inject CO₂ at the rate of 1 million tons annually for up to 1.5 years into brine as deep as 10,000 feet below the land surface near the Cranfield Oil Field, about 15 miles east of Natchez, Miss.

Scientists will use experimental equipment to measure the ability of the subsurface to accept and retain CO₂.

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