

Fracking report a 'road map' to safer energy production

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A new report to state lawmakers on hydraulic fracturing in California provides an important road map for scientists as they strive to produce energy while protecting human health and the environment, according to a scientist with appointments at University of the Pacific and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

William T. Stringfellow, director of the Environmental Measurements Laboratory at Lawrence Berkeley and a professor of engineering at Pacific, was part of a team of scientists who prepared the state-mandated independent assessment of [oil](#) well stimulation treatments, including hydraulic fracturing or fracking.

"This report represents a very significant step forward in understanding the environmental impacts of hydraulic fracturing and other oil and gas development activities in California," Stringfellow said. "It provides a [road map](#) for the science needed to ensure that energy production in California is protective of both [human health](#) and the environment, and I am sure the report will provide a significant benefit to the state and people of California."

Gov. Jerry Brown in September 2013 signed legislation by state Sen. Fran Pavley (D-Agoura Hills) regulating [hydraulic fracturing](#) and other oil extraction techniques. The legislation also required independent study of those methods. The California Natural Resources Agency commissioned the California Commission on Science and Technology, along with the national laboratory, to conduct that research.

The report looked at available research on oil well stimulation treatments in California, including the San Joaquin Basin, and looked at how those methods are applied to onshore and offshore oil and gas production in California. The results were released in three volumes, with the final two volumes released late last week.

The California Council on Science and Technology, established in 1988 by the state Legislature, is a nonpartisan, impartial, not-for-profit corporation that provides expert advice to the state government and recommendations on science and technology. For more information on CCST and the studies released Thursday, visit <http://www.ccst.us>.

Stringfellow directs the Ecological Engineering Research Program at Pacific's College of Engineering and Computer Science, where he has been a professor since 2004. EERP is the lead scientific agency on several water quality and ecosystem restoration projects focused on understanding and improving water quality in the San Joaquin River. Pacific graduate students studying ecological engineering work with Stringfellow, other Pacific faculty and visiting scientists from around the world on EERP projects.

Provided by University of the Pacific

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