

Los Angeles moves to end oil drilling in the city

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The Los Angeles City Council on Wednesday took steps intended to phase out oil drilling in the city, moving to address the legacy of environmental and health problems caused by an industry that helped

create modern Southern California.

The council voted unanimously to support a ban on any new oil wells and ordered a study that is intended to help city officials determine how to phase out existing wells in the next two decades.

"Oil drilling in Los Angeles might have made sense in the early part of the 20th century, but it sure doesn't make a lot of sense now that we've become a megalopolis at the beginning of the 21st century," said Councilman Paul Krekorian, who chairs the city's budget committee.

Under the motion approved Wednesday, the city will conduct an amortization study to understand whether [oil companies](#) have recouped the value of their investments at each oil site.

If companies have recouped those costs, [city officials](#) say it will make it easier for the city to shut down the sites.

Rock Zierman, chief executive of the California Independent Petroleum Association, said in a statement that "shutting down domestic energy production not only puts Californians out of work and reduces taxes that pay for vital services, but it makes us more dependent on imported foreign oil from Saudi Arabia and Iraq that is tankered into L.A.'s crowded port."

Crude that is produced in California complies with state environmental laws, while imports are exempt, Zierman added.

"Further, taking someone's property without compensation ... violates the U.S. Constitution's Fifth Amendment against illegal search and seizure," Zierman said.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors last year took similar

steps to phase out oil production in unincorporated areas.

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