

Insights: Publications

Induced Earthquakes Shake Up Regulatory and Litigation Landscape

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Earthquake risks continue prompting lawmakers and regulators in several oil and gas producing states to evaluate wastewater injection purportedly linked to seismic activity. This alleged link remains a hotly debated topic with various viewpoints presented. In the wake of recent seismic events and induced earthquake studies, energy industry operations remain under scrutiny by state and federal officials. Implications for potential regulation are emerging, with calls ranging from outright bans to greater monitoring and disclosure of fault locations and injection activity to those that advocate that no new regulations are needed. Recent court rulings raise issues about the appropriate liability framework for induced seismicity. As public opinion and geophysical research continue to evolve, a variety of policy trends and litigation theories are becoming apparent for hydraulic fracturing operators.

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