

SUNSI Review Complete

Template = ADM-013

E-RIDS=ADM-03

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NRC - 208-0052

Wednesday, May 18, 2016

B5

COMMENT (154)

PUBLICATION DATE: 3/30/2018

CITATION # 83 FR 13802

UT research links most recent Texas quakes to oil activity

DALLAS (AP) — A new study by researchers at the University of Texas at Austin concludes that human activity, particularly oil and gas production, has been a factor in earthquakes throughout the state for nearly 100 years.

The study's conclusions are in a paper to be published Wednesday in the journal Seismological Research Letters. The Dallas Morning News reported the study concludes that man-made earthquakes in Texas began in 1925 and that activity associated with oil and gas production "almost certainly" or "probably" triggered 59 percent of the earthquakes detected across the state in 1975-2015, including recent seismic activity in North Texas.

Another 28 percent of the quakes were "possibly" triggered by oil and gas exploration and production, and just 13 percent were caused naturally.

"The public thinks

Southern Methodist University contend in the paper to be published Wednesday that state regulators have been reluctant to acknowledge any link between seismicity and industry. Indeed, such arguments have not impressed the Texas Railroad Commission, which regulates the oil and gas industry and is dismissing the new study's conclusions.

"The commission will continue to use objective, credible scientific study as the basis for our regulatory and rulemaking functions. However, this new study acknowledges the basis for its conclusions are purely subjective in nature and in fact, admits its categorization of seismic events to be arbitrary," commission spokeswoman Ramona Nye said in an email to the newspaper.

But Williams found the classification system in the Frohlich report convincing. "It is still based on correla-

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