

PUBLICATION

Tennessee Proposes Fracturing Practices for Oil and Gas Wells

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The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation's (TEDC) proposed rules regarding fracturing practices for oil and gas wells have received approval by the Joint Government Operation Committee in the Tennessee General Assembly and will become effective June 18, 2013. After working with and receiving comments from industry and environmental groups, the department submitted rules they believe will "address large-volume hydraulic fracturing practices, incorporate current casing and blowout prevention policies, and update specifications for oil and gas wells."

The new rules are initiated primarily when more than 200,000 gallons of chemicals are used on a project. Additionally, there are new requirements placed for both drilling and maintenance of wells, as well as the oversight that will be provided to ensure compliance. The department has included public notice requirements to keep the public as informed as possible about fracturing activities within the state. Critics stress the rules are irrelevant in Tennessee because the 200,000 gallon trigger is high compared to the majority of fracturing practices in Tennessee. On the other hand, industry sources indicate the rules are not perfect but are fair and balanced. The proposed rules may be found on the State of Tennessee TEDC website soon.