UIC Priorities

GWPC UIC Conference, Austin, Texas
Opening General Session
February 22, 2017
RRC History

Established 1891

- Texas’ oldest regulatory agency
- almost 100 years regulating oil & gas
- Led by 3 statewide elected officials
• Oil and natural gas industry
• Intrastate pipelines, natural gas and hazardous liquid pipeline industry
• LPG, CNG, and LNG safety
• Natural gas utilities
• Coal and uranium surface mining operations
Oil and Gas Activity

• Texas has 434,647 oil and gas wells, including 37,467 active injection wells.*

• Texas produced 2.7 million barrels of crude oil and 22 billion cubic feet of natural gas daily in 2016.

*Source: January 2017 RRC Well Distribution Table
UIC Priorities

- Seismicity Review and Research
- Aquifer Exemptions Study
- Disposal Zone Pressures
- Underground Hydrocarbon Storage
• RRC amended disposal well rules effective Nov. 2014
  – Require permit applicants to provide additional data in areas of historical seismic activity
  – Clarify RRC authority to modify, suspend or terminate a disposal well permit
• Bureau of Economic Geology and partners
  – TexNet Seismic Network
  – Research projects
  – Technical Advisory Committee
Aquifer Exemptions Study

• RRC Class II program approved April 23, 1982
  - EPA approved aquifer exemptions for existing oil and gas production zones that fell under EPA’s definition of Underground Source of Drinking Water (USDW)

• Currently researching permitting and well records to verify that permits do not authorize injection into zones defined as USDWs that were not granted aquifer exemptions
Pressured Disposal Zones

• Localized pressure issues in some areas of East Texas and the Permian Basin

• Regulatory actions
  – Required bottomhole pressure data
  – Extended area of review (AOR)

• Research project
  – Reservoir data, including permeability and porosity
  – Casing, cement, and perforations
  – Well logs
  – Bottomhole pressures
• Active facilities in Texas
  – 13 in depleted reservoirs (151 injection wells)
  – 18 in salt caverns (52 injection wells)
• Current RRC regulations in place since 1994
• Recent RRC involvement
  – API Recommended Practice 1170 for cavern storage
  – States First Initiative’s underground gas storage workgroup
  – Comments on PHMSA interim final rule
RRC Highlights

• 2016 Year in Review
  – milestones
  – accomplishments
  – video
  – photos
  – infographics
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