

PRESS RELEASE

University of Texas study on injection of waste water
“Quebec is not Texas” Mario Lévesque, president OGSAQ

Montreal, August 9 2012 – It is in these terms that the president of The Oil and Gas association of Quebec (OGSAQ), reacted to the study by Professor Cliff Frohlich of the University of Texas featured yesterday by La Presse newspaper. The study, which deals with earthquakes related to the injection of drilling waste water into wells, concludes that they cannot directly link earthquakes to water injection, although injection does increase the probability of such an event.

Mr. Lévesque clarifies that in Quebec, “the water recuperated from hydraulic fracturing **is not injected into the ground, but is recycled or treated in the field**. Moreover, given the small amounts of heavy metals present in the Lowlands basement rock, the flow back water is environmentally safe. The Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks (MDDEP) independently collected and analyzed data and confirmed that indeed these waste waters contain salt concentrations only slightly above Quebec regulation criteria. For these waters, dilution is the only necessary treatment.”

“These waters actually contain less salt than sea water, and are much easier to treat than municipal wastewater received in water treatment plants,” added Mr. Lévesque. “For these reasons, it doesn’t make much sense to inject the flow back water into the ground and the conclusion of the University of Texas study is inconsequential for Quebec. Those who suggest otherwise are at best misinformed and at worst of bad faith.”

Furthermore, the study concluded that in order for waste water fluid injection to trigger an earthquake it must occur next to an unstable fault. A scientific study written by John Brodylo, Jean-Yves Chatellier, Guillaume Matton, and Michel Rheault published in November 2011 by the Society of Petroleum Engineers has demonstrated that it is very unlikely that hydraulic fracturing in the St. Lawrence lowlands would activate surface faults due to the stable nature of faults in this region. “Our opponents have reviewed these studies and have found no reason to contradict the findings,” confirmed Mr. Lévesque. Therefore even if someone were to inject flow-back water into the ground, the likeliness of an earthquake is extremely low.

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