

14-0339

MAR 18 2014

MOTION

PUBLIC SAFETY

On March 17, 2014, at 6:25a.m., a 4.4-magnitude earthquake struck beneath the Santa Monica Mountains between Westwood and Encino in Los Angeles. *The Los Angeles Times* reported that the temblor surprised seismologists because it was the strongest to hit directly under the Santa Monica Mountains in the 80 years since seismic recordkeeping began in the area. Additionally, the quake had an unusual epicenter, on a little-known fault.

Hydraulic fracturing (also known as “fracking”) is an unconventional oil and natural gas extraction method that involves the very highly-pressurized injection of hydraulic fracturing fluids into underground geologic formations in order to fracture the rock, thereby increasing flows to and furthering the production of oil or gas from a well. The wastewater from such unconventional methods are generally injected underground for disposal.

All high-pressure fracking and injection creates “seismic events.” The United States Geological Survey (USGS) reports that the number of noticeable earthquakes (greater than a 3.0 Richter magnitude) has increased dramatically over the past few years within the central and eastern United States. USGS scientists have found that at some locations the increase in seismicity coincides with the injection of wastewater into deep disposal wells.

The USGS has also determined that fracking wastewater disposal is responsible for triggering earthquakes in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Texas and Ohio, among other states.

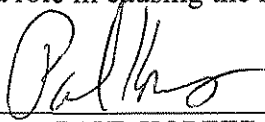
Much of the City is located on top of fault lines within one of the most active and potentially dangerous earthquake zones in the United States.


Active oil extraction activities are reportedly taking place on the Veteran’s Administration grounds in West Los Angeles, nearby the epicenter of the March 17, 2014, 4.4 earthquake.

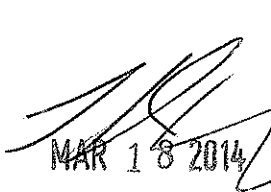
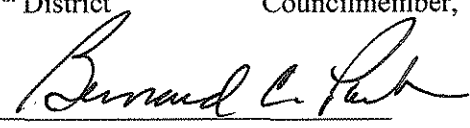
The Los Angeles City Council voted to institute a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing, acidizing and other highly-pressurized well stimulation activity and associated waste disposal injection wells until their effects – including seismic – can be better studied and the safety of Los Angeles residents and their property are assured.

It is crucial to the health and safety of the City’s residents to understand the seismic impacts of oil and gas extraction activities in the City.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council direct the Department of Emergency Management with the assistance of the Department of Building and Safety, to work with the California Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources, the USGS and the South Coast Air Quality Management District, to report back on the likelihood that oil or gas well stimulation activities may have played a role in causing the March 17, 2014, 6:25a.m., 4.4-magnitude earthquake.

PRESENTED BY 
PAUL KORETZ
Councilmember, 5th District


MIKE BONIN
Councilmember, 11th District


MAR 18 2014
SECONDED BY 

ORIGINAL