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Environmental Groups Respond to Gov. Brown's Fracking Regulations

Final draft regulations rife with industry loopholes and weak protections leave Californians vulnerable

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Environmental groups, including Californians Against Fracking, the Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council and Clean Water Action, issued the following response today to Gov. Jerry Brown's final draft fracking regulations required by Senate Bill 4.

Issued months before the mandated Environmental Impact Report is complete, these rules do not consider the long-term and wide-ranging environmental, public health and economic consequences of fracking in California.

“Rather than protect Californians, Gov. Brown's regulations will allow fracking to continue unabated – polluting and wasting our precious water supplies and intensifying climate change. With the majority of Californians in agreement about the risks to our environment and health, Gov. Brown has every reason to place an immediate moratorium on fracking,” said **Rose Braz of Californians Against Fracking**.

“The proposed regulations will not protect California's air, water and public health. The only responsible action is to place a moratorium on fracking until real protections are established for Californians,” said **Kathryn Phillips, director of Sierra Club California**.

“While California's fracking regulations take some steps to hold the oil and gas industry accountable, and provide new transparency, they clearly do not go far enough to protect the state's residents, schools and communities. It's time for our state leaders to listen to the people they represent and put a moratorium in place,” said **Victoria Rome of the Natural Resources Defense Council**.

“Millions of Californians rely on groundwater for drinking water, and in this time of historic drought putting already depleted aquifers at risk of contamination is reckless public policy. To protect dwindling water supplies, California needs a moratorium on fracking,” said **Andrew Grinberg of Clean Water Action**.

BACKGROUND:

Fracking uses huge volumes of water mixed with dangerous chemicals to blast open rock formations and release oil and gas. The controversial technique has been used in at least 1,900 California oil and gas wells, endangering California's air, water, wildlife, public health and climate.

[Recent analysis by Californians Against Fracking found that the oil and gas industry uses more than 2 million gallons of water on average each day](#) in California for dangerous extraction techniques such as fracking, acidizing and cyclic steam injection.

This summer, [California officials ordered an emergency shutdown of oil and gas waste injection sites and a review of more than 100 others](#) in the Central Valley out of concerns that companies are pumping potentially hazardous wastewater into drinking water and irrigation aquifers. The state water board later

confirmed that at least 9 wells were injecting harmful wastewater from the oil industry into protected aquifers.

In April, the Center for Biological Diversity found [more than 100 violations of the disclosure rules for fracking and other dangerous oil production methods required by SB 4](#). Since then, these violations have gone unaddressed by Gov. Brown and his state agency. A recent analysis found that fracking and other well stimulation in the South Coast Air Basin employed 44 million pounds of air toxics in just one year. Oil companies have also fracked hundreds of wells off California's coast, often using chemicals that are suspected ecological hazards. Yet DOGGR's new regulations would do nothing to end the use of these dangerous chemicals.

In response to Gov. Brown's continued refusal to protect residents by placing a moratorium on fracking, California communities are moving forward with [local measures to halt fracking and other extreme extraction methods](#).

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Californians Against Fracking is a coalition of about 200 environmental business, health, agriculture, labor, political and environmental justice organizations working to win a statewide ban on fracking in California. Follow @CAagainstFrack on Twitter.

Sierra Club California is the legislative and regulatory advocacy arm of the Sierra Club in the state, representing 13 local chapters and more than 380,000 Club members and supporters in California.

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) is an international nonprofit environmental organization with more than 1.4 million members and online activists, more than 250,000 of whom are Californians. Visit us at www.nrdc.org and follow us on Twitter @NRDC.

Clean Water Action is a national organization, founded in 1972, that has 55,000 members in California. We empower people to take action to protect water resources, build healthy communities, and make democracy work.