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2011-2012**

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Certified Neighborhood Council
August 13, 2002

August 7, 2012

**Governor Jerry Brown
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814**

**The Mayor of the City of Los Angeles
Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa
200 North Spring St., Room 303
Los Angeles, CA 90012**

County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors

**Los Angeles City Council
City Hall Office
200 N. Spring Street, Room 410
Los Angeles, CA 90012**

RE: Council File: 12-0002-S61, Fracking in California

Dear Governor Brown:

CC: Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa; The County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors; Los Angeles City Council

In order to protect California public health and environment, the Mar Vista Community Council urges you to place an immediate ban on fracking in California. Culver City Council has already unanimously passed a resolution calling on the state to ban fracking. The Los Angeles City Council has introduced the same resolution which the Mar Vista Community Council wholeheartedly endorses. The mere disclosure of where fracking is occurring and the chemicals used in the process does not prevent them from polluting our air and water. The fracking process is simply too dangerous to be properly regulated. As fracking operations continue to threaten California, we urge you to take swift action and issue an immediate ban on all fracking operations in California.

From the Sacramento Valley to Los Angeles County, the oil and gas industry has only just begun to frack California. Next generation fracking is now here, and will affect the Mar Vista Community.

Millions of gallons of a mixture of water, sand and chemicals can now be injected deep underground at high pressure to fracture shale and other tight rock formations, allowing oil or gas to flow. This is a radical departure from the fracking traditionally done in California to "rework" wells, wringing out more production after wells were first drilled.

While modern drilling and fracking may be an engineering marvel, it results in millions of gallons of toxic wastewater and thousands of tons of solid waste for each new well. It causes serious air pollution problems and creates serious short- and long-term risks to drinking water resources. And it compounds the already alarming threats that global climate change poses to the California economy.

Fracking pollutes water

Known and suspected carcinogens, including naphthalene, benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and acrylamide, have been consistently used in fracking fluid. In a draft report published in December 2011, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently found that fracking likely explained groundwater contamination in Pavilion, WY. In addition to fracking chemicals, fracking wastewater contains potentially extreme levels of naturally occurring but harmful contaminants, such as toxic metals and radioactive material.

The Plains Exploration and Production Corporation (PXP) has already fracked two wells at the Inglewood Field in Los Angeles – which is boarded by Culver City on the west, on the north by the Los Angeles Mid-City district, and on the east by the Crenshaw district. However PXP plans to continue fracking, and a large amount of the untapped oil reserves are located underneath Culver City residential homes which is miles outside the actual borders of the oil field. Fracking on the Inglewood Oil Field threatens to contaminate local groundwater and Ballona Creek, which discharges into Santa Monica Bay. In June of 2011, the EPA found that the Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) is not adequately safeguarding California's water from pollution from faulty wells citing inadequate staffing among other problems. In addition, many of the industry's targeted wells are in the Sacramento River watershed and San Francisco Bay Delta areas, a source of drinking water for over 23 million Californians.

In 2002, California agencies reviewed oil exploration and production wastes to consider whether such wastes should continue to be considered "non-hazardous". Thanks to a special oil and gas industry exemption, the non-hazardous status was maintained. However, waste from fracking was not considered in this review.

In California, wastewater from fracking and conventional drilling is often injected underground into wells not designed to hold fracking wastewater. In 2008 oil companies in Kern County pumped 425 million barrels of wastewater into such wells. These wells have been known to leak, resulting in groundwater pollution. One farmer in Kern County suffered \$2 billion in economic loss when his crops died as a result of groundwater contaminated from oil drilling wastewater. In 2011 alone, industry wastewater from the Inglewood Oil Field of Los Angeles produced over 126 million barrels of wastewater that was then pumped back into over 200 wells.

Fracking pollutes air

Fracking is resulting in serious local and regional air pollution problems across the country. Hazardous air pollutants found near fracking sites include methanol, formaldehyde, and carbon disulfide. Volatile organic compounds, including nitrogen oxides, benzene and toluene, are also discharged during fracking. These compounds mix with emissions from heavy-duty truck traffic, large generators and compressors at well sites and contribute to smog formation. A recent study by the University of Colorado found rates of air pollutants five times above a federal hazard standard near fracking sites in Colorado. Increased air pollution from fracking is of particular concern in California, with many areas having some of the worst air quality in our nation.

In addition, widespread drilling and fracking in California will only undermine the state's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, pursuant to AB 32. In addition to emissions generated by producing, refining and burning shale oil, drilling and fracking for shale oil can result in significant uncontrolled emissions of methane; a potent greenhouse gas often associated underground with oil.

Fracking: earthquakes and ground movement

What is known is that oil and gas extraction has caused earthquakes in California in the past, most notably in Wilmington, California from 1947 to 1961, and more recently a dozen small earthquakes shook Eastern Ohio due to fracking wastewater being disposed of in underground injection disposal wells. What is unknown is whether the modern fracking in California, and the disposal of massive volumes of fracking wastewater, will end up causing potentially destructive earthquakes in California's future.

The Inglewood Oil Field, situated in a community of 300,000 people, lies over two earthquake faults. One of the fault lines is already expected to

have a 7.4 earthquake. Since PXP escalated its drilling in 2006, local residents in communities such as Culver City and Baldwin Hills have seen their homes crack and their land sink. Ever more powerful and intense fracking could result in much greater and more costly property damages for these local residents.

Fracking and property values

In addition fracking is causing further economic woes for communities across the country, leaving plummeting property values in its wake. A homeowner in Pennsylvania was recently denied a mortgage based on fracking underway on his neighbor's property and Quicken Loans has cited plummeting values near fracking sites as consideration in its loan-making decisions. If PXP moves ahead with increasing fracking operations on the Inglewood Oil Field, and in and under Culver City, this could have a real impact on the Mar Vista Community.

Because of these severe consequences, a ban is essential to protect California.

Sincerely,



Sharon Commins, Chair
Mar Vista Community Council