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**DU Environmental Law Clinic Analysis Indicates Lax Enforcement on Oil & Gas Setbacks**

DENVER, COLORADO: Gov. John Hickenlooper's administration is approving oil and gas drilling near homes, schools and businesses without following its own regulations, according to a new analysis by student attorneys at the University of Denver Environmental Law Clinic conducted for the Sierra Club.

The study recommends the Colorado Oil & Gas Commission (COGCC) reject incomplete drilling permit applications, increase and standardize notification of residents near drilling and fracking, improve online information access and base setback requirements on science and necessary precautions to protect public health and environment.

"The COGCC has a job to do, which is to implement strong regulations and enforce those regulations to protect public health, safety and the environment. When it comes to drilling and fracking near communities, citizens and local government are the ones living with the impacts and their voices need to be ones that are given the most weight in the process," said Catherine Collentine of the Sierra Club.

Colorado regulations, in effect since August, 2013, require pads with multiple oil and gas wells located within 1,000 feet from homes, schools and businesses be placed "as far as possible" from those buildings. The governor and COGCC promised increased enforcement of the regulation last fall, but the analysis found no evidence of additional rigor in permit reviews.

Student attorneys at DU Environmental Law Clinic conducted a legal review of 1300 permits issued since August, 2013 and discovered 181 were granted, despite incomplete documentation. Those 181 permits accounted for an immense amount of development:

951 wells, 1221 tanks and 932 separators. Most of the 181 permits for oil and gas wells are located in Weld County - others originated in Adams, Garfield, Larimer and La Plata Counties.

“All I am asking for is to prevent errors up front so that there are no problems later on and no risks later on...,” said Katherine Hall, a Larimer County resident, at Monday’s COGCC meeting who recently discovered dozens of significant errors for a multi-well permit application 2,000 feet from a school. “These children deserve that...” \*

“We hope that our analysis will help inform the COGCC as it works to meet its goal of protecting the health and safety of all Coloradoans,” said Lauren Bushong, student attorney with DU’s Environmental Law Clinic. “If followed, our recommendations should allow for greater, and more meaningful, public participation in the permitting process.”

The analysis can be found online at:

<http://www.sierraclub.org/rocky-mountain-chapter/2015-du-assessment-oil-and-gas-siting>

<http://www.law.du.edu/index.php/law-school-clinical-program/clinical-programs/environmental-law-clinic>

\*Katherine Hall’s complete comments are available at approximately 1 hour, 12 minutes into the audio testimony:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sK89PKhHi5k>