

TX Earthquake Monitoring System Up and Running

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By Bill O'Neil

Texas—the new California?

An increasing number of earthquakes recorded across the Lone Star State in recent years may have some thinking exactly that.

“When earthquakes started happening in places where they hadn’t happened before, the Legislature, industry, regulators and academics said hey—it would be nice to get out in front of these” said Texas State Geologist Scott Tinker.

Many believe the quakes—as many as forty per year since 2010—are the result in a big boom of oil and gas exploration across Texas. That’s why TexNet is now up and running.

The system is made up of 22 permanent stations and 40 mobile monitors which can be positioned in areas of high earthquake activity.

“This is also driven indirectly by the experience in Oklahoma—which has had a truly massive increase in earthquakes in the last few years” said Scott Anderson with the Environmental Defense Fund.

“When you get an earthquake of a magnitude of 2.5 or 3... which is still kind of relatively large for Texas... people wouldn’t quit reading the paper or having a cocktail in California” Tinker said with a laugh.