

Q&A

Investigating Air Pollution and Noise Exposure Near Unconventional Oil and Gas Development in the Eagle Ford Shale of Texas

Study Description

Scientists at The University of Texas at Austin will develop a broadly applicable model, the "TRACKing Community Exposures and Releases" (TRACER) model. The model will assess potential community exposures to chemicals in the air from Unconventional Oil and Gas Development (UOGD) processes (which include horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing) and inform future health studies. The team will also measure chemical and noise levels near sources and near communities in the Eagle Ford Shale and use the measurements to evaluate the model. This study is part of a three-team research collaboration funded by HEI Energy that aims to improve understanding of potential community exposures associated with UOGD in the United States.



General Study Location

Questions and Answers

Who is funding the research?

HEI Energy is funding this research. HEI Energy receives joint funding from government, the oil and gas industry, and foundations. All research is selected, overseen, and reviewed independently of HEI Energy's sponsors. [Learn more about our sponsors.](#)

What will the researchers measure, where, and when?

The researchers are measuring noise and chemicals emitted to the air at various distances from UOGD sites. They will collect measurements from early 2023 through early 2024.

How might I benefit from this research?

The study will provide additional information about potential chemical and noise exposures and the oil and gas activities that give rise to them. This information will be presented as data and tools that community members, policymakers, operators and others can use in making decisions about how best to protect public health.

How can I get involved?

Please contact Lea Hildebrandt Ruiz (lhr@che.utexas.edu) if you are interested in allowing the research team to place air or noise monitoring equipment on your property or if you are an operator interested in allowing the research team to place monitoring equipment on or near a well pad or sharing operational or monitoring data.

How can I stay up to date on the progress of the research?

Sign up for email updates at <https://www.heienergy.org/research-updates>. You can also check the [project website](#) which will provide information about future events, study progress, announcements, updates and reports, and other information. You may also contact Lea Hildebrandt Ruiz (lhr@che.utexas.edu) for [additional research updates and details](#).

Research Team Leads

Lea Hildebrandt Ruiz (Study Lead)

Associate Professor,
University of Texas at Austin

David Allen

Professor, University of Texas at Austin

Lucas Henneman

Assistant Professor,
George Mason University

Elizabeth Matsui

Associate Chair for Research and Professor,
University of Texas at Austin

Pawel Misztal

Assistant Professor,
University of Texas at Austin

Roger Peng

Professor, Johns Hopkins University