

Fracking Does Not Cause Earthquakes!

This is for the presses benefit not for the oil patch, so Alaska does not have replay of garbage that is hyped and peddled in the south 48 states about fracking.

Fracking may trigger an earthquake but the enormous amounts of energy that is needed for an earthquake is already in place and dwarfs the comparatively tiny amount energy supplied by fracking and /or waste disposal.

The earthquake energy is supplied one or more earth plates subducting another or in the differential movement of a plate passing another plate. When fracking prematurely triggers the earthquake energy, the fracking ameliorates the damage that would occur through the continued accumulation of earthquake energy.

One may think of the process as charging a muzzle loader with black powder then firing the charge with a cap. The cap's energy is very small and would not drive the bullet out the end of the barrel. A cap only ignites the black powder charge which drives the bullet.

Taking a little more liberty:

Hilcorp bought out Chevron's Drift River tank farm. The last time Mt. Redoubt erupted, a hysterical Coast Guard stampeded Chevron into draining tank farm which left a couple of feet sludge in the bottom of the tanks. Draining the tanks was the worst thing that they could do.

They should have filled the tanks because the tanks are the strongest when the tanks are full and the outward pressure is the greatest to resist any pressure from Redoubt's lahar. It is passed time for Hilcorp to take the Coast Guard aside and explain the engineering and not wait until Redoubt blows again then try to explain.

I do not want to hear from flack about Hilcorp's new improved berm. The Coast Guard must assume the lahar will over run the berm. So then what? With the tanks full the lahar will just flow around the tanks. Empty tanks are not designed to take side load and with mostly empty tanks the lahar will crush the tanks and the sludge will escape.

While there is a pipeline planned, I am an optimistic the amount of oil, that will be produced on the Westside of Cook Inlet, will far exceed what Tesoro can utilize in the future. Westside oil production will need an alternative shipping point.

Jerry McCutcheon