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**New step in study of Alaska's oil and gas infrastructure**

**State invites public comment on risk assessment methodology;  
National Academy of Sciences also to review approach**

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(Juneau—March 24, 2009) Members of the public now can comment on the approach developed to assess the health of the state's oil and gas infrastructure. Public meetings are planned for Anchorage, Fairbanks, Kenai, Barrow and Valdez to present the approach and answer questions. The comment period will end June 2.

Development of the methodology—a mathematical model to quantify risks—is the focus of the first phase of the Alaska Risk Assessment, a three-year, \$5 million initiative to evaluate Alaska's oil and gas infrastructure. The study is an outcome of the spills, leaks and corrosion discovered on the North Slope in recent years. When complete, the assessment will report on the status of the existing infrastructure, components, systems and hazards. It will identify and rank risks based on consequences to state revenue, safety and the environment and will assist the state in making mitigation recommendations. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), working in cooperation with the Petroleum Systems Integrity Office (PSIO), is leading the risk assessment project.

“Finalizing the method we use to evaluate the condition of Alaska's oil and gas infrastructure is a key step in the overall assessment of this complex system,” said Larry Dietrick, ADEC director of Spill Prevention and Response.

As part of the project, the State gathered input from government agencies, industry and the public in 2008. Those ideas helped shape the design of the risk assessment model. “Stakeholders now have a chance to confirm issues and concerns they identified have been included in our approach,” said Ira Rosen, DEC project manager.

The National Academy of Sciences is also reviewing the report and will schedule Alaska workshops in May to gather input.

The risk assessment methodology is scheduled to be completed this summer. It will act as a framework for evaluating information on vulnerabilities and safeguards in the state's oil and gas infrastructure. The overall Alaska Risk Assessment results are expected to be published in 2010. Copies of the methodology and more information on the project are online at [www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/ipp/ara/](http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/ipp/ara/).