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Public workshop on Alaska oil and gas infrastructure

Full-day briefing May 5 in Anchorage to cover framework for evaluating risks; National Academy of Sciences expert available for interviews on risk assessment

(Juneau – May 4, 2009) Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) invites members of the public to an Alaska Risk Assessment workshop Tuesday. The day-long session will focus on the project's proposed methodology, a mathematical model to quantify risks in Alaska's oil and gas infrastructure.

The May 5 workshop – at the Z. J. Loussac Library from 10am to 4pm--will include a walk-through of the methods developed to look at different risks posed by the state's aging oil and gas systems. Discussions will also center on how public input helped shape the methodology; participants will have a chance to identify concerns associated with the proposed approach. The workshop is designed for people keenly interested in the risk assessment project. Those planning to attend are encouraged to read the proposed methodology report available by clicking the following link:

http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/ipp/ara/documents/Proposed%20Risk%20Assessment%20Methodology_Rev%201.pdf

Public meetings on the project are also scheduled in May for Kenai, Valdez and Fairbanks. DEC, which is leading the project, is accepting public comments on the methodology until June 2.

A National Academy of Sciences (NAS) panel is also reviewing the framework. The seven-person NAS panel is chaired by Paul S. Fischbeck, a professor in the Departments of Engineering and Public Policy at Carnegie Mellon University in

Pittsburgh, where he directs the Center for the Study of Improvement of Regulation. The panel also includes Shirish Patil, an engineering professor at University of Alaska, Fairbanks. The NAS panel will travel around Alaska in May to gather input from stakeholders on the project.

The Alaska Risk Assessment is an initiative to evaluate Alaska's oil and gas infrastructure. When complete, it will report on the status of the existing infrastructure, components, systems and hazards. Results are expected to be published in 2010.