

Health concerns associated with Oil & Gas Development Plans (OGDP), particularly those related to oil and gas extraction activities, have been widely documented. Communities living near these projects can face several potential health risks, largely driven by air and water pollution, noise, and other environmental changes. Here are the key health concerns:

1. Air Pollution and Respiratory Health:

- **Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs):** Emissions from oil and gas activities often release VOCs such as benzene, toluene, and xylene into the air. These compounds are associated with respiratory problems and have been linked to more severe health risks like cancer. Long-term exposure to benzene, for example, has been associated with leukemia and other blood disorders (WebReportPDF)(WebReportPDF).
- **Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) and Particulate Matter (PM):** The combustion processes during drilling and the use of heavy machinery release NOx and fine particulate matter (PM). These pollutants contribute to asthma, bronchitis, and other chronic lung diseases. They can also aggravate pre-existing heart and lung conditions, particularly in sensitive populations such as children and the elderly(WebReportPDF).

2. Water Contamination and Gastrointestinal Issues:

- **Hydraulic Fracturing (Fracking) and other drilling techniques** can pose risks to groundwater supplies if the protective barriers between the well and water sources fail. Methane, heavy metals, and chemical additives used in fracking fluid may migrate into water wells, potentially causing gastrointestinal diseases, nausea, and neurological effects if consumed(WebReportPDF).
- **Studies have found higher instances of skin rashes and nausea** in areas where water contamination from oil and gas operations has been reported.

3. Noise Pollution and Sleep Disruption:

- **Noise from drilling operations, heavy equipment, and transport vehicles** can lead to chronic stress and sleep disturbances. Prolonged exposure to high noise levels is associated with increased risks of hypertension, heart disease, and mental health issues such as anxiety and depression(WebReportPDF).

4. Odor and Mental Health:

- **Odor-causing compounds released during oil and gas production, such as hydrogen sulfide (H₂S), can have direct physical effects like headaches, dizziness, and eye irritation. Prolonged exposure to strong odors has been linked to stress and diminished quality of life, impacting mental health (WebReportPDF).**

5. Chemical Spills and Acute Health Effects:

- **The accidental release of chemicals used in oil and gas extraction, such as corrosion inhibitors, paraffin solvents, and methanol, poses an acute health risk. Direct exposure can lead to skin burns, respiratory distress, and in severe cases, chemical poisoning.**

6. Long-Term Exposure to Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs):

- **Long-term exposure to hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) such as benzene and formaldehyde, often emitted from storage tanks, compressors, and during venting/blowdowns, has been linked to increased risks of cancer, liver damage, and neurological issues(WebReportPDF).**

7. Mental Health and Psychological Stress:

- **The disruption of daily life due to oil and gas operations—ranging from noise, odor, and light pollution to the fear of environmental contamination—can lead to psychological stress. This has been associated with depression, anxiety, and chronic stress, which in turn can have secondary physical health impacts (WebReportPDF).**

8. Increased Risk of Birth Defects:

- **Some studies suggest that living near oil and gas wells is associated with higher rates of preterm births and birth defects. This is possibly due to the exposure of pregnant women to air pollutants like VOCs and particulate matter, which can interfere with fetal development(WebReportPDF).**

9. Endocrine Disruptors and Reproductive Health:

- **Chemicals used in oil and gas operations, such as phthalates and other endocrine-disrupting compounds, may interfere with hormone systems. Long-term exposure can affect reproductive health, leading to decreased fertility, menstrual irregularities, and developmental issues in children (WebReportPDF).**

Mitigation Strategies:

- **Air monitoring around these sites and the use of cleaner technologies, such as Tier IV engines (as mentioned in the document), are critical to reducing emissions.**
- **Water protection measures, including proper well casings and the recycling of produced water, are important to prevent contamination.**
- **Noise barriers and downward lighting can mitigate some of the more immediate physical impacts of living near an oil and gas site.**

These health concerns are important for the community to understand, as they can directly impact quality of life, particularly for those living in close proximity to oil and gas operations. Communities need to be informed about both potential risks and the mitigation efforts being put in place to safeguard public health.

impacts of an Oil & Gas Development Plan (OGDP) by Extraction Oil & Gas Inc. Here are the most important parts that could have a significant impact on the community:

1. Noise Impacts:

- **During the pre-production and production stages, the report states that noise impacts will be minimal due to mitigation measures, such as sound walls. This is important for the community, especially those living within 2000 feet of the site. Reduced noise levels during both stages can lessen disturbances to residents(WebReportPDF).**

2. Light Impacts:

- **The report indicates that both pre-production and production activities will cause minimal light pollution. This is due to downcast lighting and sound walls designed to minimize light spillage into the community (WebReportPDF). This is crucial for maintaining the night environment, especially in residential areas.**

3. Odor Impacts:

- **Odors may increase temporarily during pre-production activities, especially due to equipment exhaust and fluid management. However, during the production phase, upgrades to equipment should reduce odor emissions(WebReportPDF). This will have a direct impact on the living conditions of nearby residents.**

4. Water Resources:

- **The site is located within 2,640 feet of a water source, making water management a key concern. Measures such as the use of polyethylene liners and water recycling during operations are highlighted to protect water resources(WebReportPDF). This is important for the community, especially for protecting local water supplies from potential contamination.**

5. Wildlife and Ecosystem Impacts:

- **The plan includes steps to mitigate impacts on wildlife, such as avian surveys before construction and using pipelines to reduce vehicular traffic that could harm wildlife(WebReportPDF). These steps are essential to preserve local ecosystems and prevent harm to species in the area.**

6. Air Quality and Emissions:

- **The plan outlines emissions estimates during pre-production and production stages, including pollutants like Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)(WebReportPDF). The company plans to use high-efficiency equipment to reduce emissions, which directly impacts air quality in the surrounding community.**

7. Economic and Employment Impacts:

- **The project will create local jobs and generate tax revenue for the state, which can benefit the community economically. Additionally, the decommissioning of 22 existing wells will help reduce environmental hazards(WebReportPDF).**

8. Public Health:

- **The report suggests that there should not be significant long-term health risks from air emissions during both the pre-production and production phases based on their air quality monitoring. This is a significant consideration for community members concerned about health impacts from the project(WebReportPDF).**

These points reflect both the potential impacts and the mitigation strategies outlined in the document, providing a clearer understanding of how the project could affect the local community.

40

You said:

Does it talk about how close the projects will be to individual's homes?

ChatGPT said:

ChatGPT

Yes, the document mentions the proximity of the project to residential areas.

Specifically, it states:

- **Building Units within 1 mile:** There are 124 residential building units within 2,001 to 5,280 feet (approximately 0.38 to 1 mile) of the Oil & Gas Location (WebReportPDF).
- **The project falls within a Disproportionately Impacted Community, which indicates that it is located in an area where residents may face higher environmental or public health burdens**(WebReportPDF).

This proximity to homes means that the community may experience some of the project's impacts, such as noise, light, and air quality changes, despite the mitigation measures planned.

Here are some interesting facts about Erie, Colorado:

- **Location:** Erie is situated about **30 minutes north of Denver** in Boulder County, at an elevation of **5,130 feet**¹.
- **Population:** As of the 2020 census, Erie has a population of **30,038** people, reflecting a **65.64% increase** since the 2010 census².
- **History:** Erie was founded by Reverend Richard Van Valkenburg in **1871**, and it was incorporated as a town in **18743**. It became a city in **18853**.
- **Community:** Erie is known for its **conservation of natural environment and open spaces**, offering magnificent scenery from its hills¹.
- **Mottos:** The town mottos are "**Your Future Is Here**" and "**expERIEnce**"¹.
- **County Split:** The town is split between **Weld County** (58% of residents) and **Boulder County** (42% of residents)².

- **[Extraction Draco OGDG Rule 511 Local Public Hearing - Docket No. 240100004](#)**
- Published: 10/09/2024
- On October 29, 2024 the ECMC will host a Local Public Hearing at Erie Middle School regarding the Extraction Draco OGDG. Doors open at 4:30pm, then welcome remarks & public comment from 5-8 pm. Childcare & Spanish interpretation will be provided. Walk-ins welcome but members of the public who wish to speak are [encouraged to register](#). Sign-up by noon on October 28th.

Energy & Carbon Management Commission (ECMC) Hearing: Proposed Draco Pad

UPDATE - Oct. 8, 2024:

The Colorado Energy & Carbon Management Commission (ECMC) will hold a local public hearing on the proposed Draco Pad Oct. 29, 2024, at the Erie Middle School from 5 - 8 p.m. The ECMC is holding the public hearing at the request of Flatiron Meadows Oil & Gas Monitoring Group (FMOGMG) with support from the Town of Erie under Rule 511.

Further details including a public comment sign-up sheet will be provided in the coming days.

In January, 2024, Civitas Resources submitted the application for the proposed oil and gas project in unincorporated Weld County, to the ECMC. Weld County approved the Weld County Oil and Gas Location Assessment (WOGLA) application on Feb. 29, 2024. The ECMC is the state body that regulates oil and gas drilling and hydraulic fracking in Colorado. The commission will hear make a final decision on the proposal at a hearing scheduled for Nov. 6, 2024.

Previous Notification: July 16, 2024

The Town of Erie received notice from Energy & Carbon Management Commission (ECMC) staff and from Extraction Oil & Gas Inc./Civitas Resources that the Oil and Gas Development Plan (OGDP) submitted in January has finished completeness review. A tentative hearing date has been set for Aug. 21, 2024. Sign up for verbal public comment will be available the week prior to the hearing date once scheduled. Written public comment can be provided at: [eFiling Public Comment Portal](#) by entering the Draco Pad Docket Number **240100004**. [Access the Public Comment Info Sheet](#).

The Extraction facility, named "Draco Pad", is proposing 26 wells and associated equipment to be located on approximately 19.45 acres outside of Erie limits in unincorporated Weld County, north of Weld County Road 6 and west of Weld County Road 7 near the Westerly Subdivision. The wells would be drilled down approximately 7,000ft and then turned horizontally and advanced ~5 miles to the west toward Highway 287. The oil and gas development was approved by Weld County on Feb. 29, 2024.

Town of Erie Director of Environmental Services, David Frank, provided a summary of the proposed operations to the Town Council on April 16, 2024. [View the meeting online](#) and [review a transcript of the meeting](#).

The primary concerns of the Town are as follows:

Existing Wells: Plugging and abandoning of 24 wells within the area of proposed production, many of which are within Erie limits as well as confirmation that the existing plugged and abandoned wells in the proposed production area are not compromised.

Traffic and Transportation: Extraction has agreed to conduct traffic impact studies and take financial responsibility to road damage. Negotiations of details are on-going.

Landscaping: Extraction has proposed building a berm along the northern edge and an 8-foot chain-link fence with privacy slats along the western edge of the pad; however, Erie believes that further consultation is necessary to ensure that any fencing solution aligns with the aesthetic and functional needs of the future neighborhood and has proposed initiating discussions with Erie and the developer to explore alternative fencing materials and designs that may better integrate with the surrounding environment while still providing the necessary screening and security.

Schedule: Erie has requested a commitment to a single occupation of the site and a firm deadline of not less than 3 years to end preproduction activities. This will avoid potential timing conflicts with the Westerly Residential Development to the west.

Air Quality/Environmental Issues: The entire OGDPA is currently under review. Erie intends to ensure that any and all available best management practices, policies, and engineering controls be implemented to lessen to the extent possible the public health and environmental impacts from the proposed oil and gas development.

Additional information regarding local government requirements, siting, and approval are available by contacting Weld County at:

Local Government Designee

Jennifer Teeters | Regulatory Analyst II
Weld County Oil & Gas Energy Department
970-400-3539
jteeters@weldgov.com

Additional information regarding the proposed Draco Pad oil and gas location is available at <https://www.civitascommunityrelations.com/dracopad> or by contacting the operator at:

Jeff Annable

Extraction Oil & Gas Inc.
303-312-8529
jannable@civiresources.com

Previous Notification: Jan. 8, 2024

Wellsite Assessment: Proposed Draco Pad

The Town of Erie received notice from Weld County staff and from Extraction Oil & Gas Inc./Civitas Resources regarding a proposed oil and gas location application for assessment by the County.

The Extraction facility, named "Draco Pad", is proposing 26 wells and associated equipment to be located on approximately 19.45 acres outside of Erie limits, north of Weld County Road 6 and west of Weld County Road 7 near the Westerly Subdivision.

A public hearing is tentatively scheduled on Feb. 29 at the Weld County OGED office. The complete Weld County Location Assessment (WOGLA) submittal is available from the [Weld County Applications page](#) (Record 1041WOGLA23-0062). Additional information, including information on remote attendance to the WOGLA hearing, is available by contacting Weld County staff at:

Local Government Designee

Jennifer Teeters | Regulatory Analyst II
Oil & Gas Energy Department
970-400-3539
jteeters@weldgov.com

Additional information regarding the proposed Draco Pad oil and gas location is available by contacting the operator at:

Jeff Annable

Extraction Oil & Gas Inc.
303-312-8529
jannable@civiresources.com

Concerns about the reach of Extraction's proposal — for what's known as the Draco pad — underscore the stark differences in how stringently municipalities across Colorado regulate oil and gas. A unique 2019 state law allows cities and counties to impose their own requirements on energy development. Since its adoption, local governments enacted rules that require operators to curb traffic, monitor pollution in the air and water, use the land wisely and protect wildlife. Restrictions vary widely from place to place. Weld County, for instance, requires only a 500-foot setback between wells and homes, while the town of Erie, where the Draco pad would be built, mandates a 2,000-foot distance between the two. Civitas Resources Inc., which owns Extraction, acknowledged on its [website](#) its inability to comply with Boulder County regulations when it searched for a place to locate the Draco pad. "Extraction reviewed areas within Boulder County and the Town of Erie and determined that there were no feasible locations that were allowed by local regulations," company officials wrote on a [webpage](#) dedicated to the Draco pad proposal. Erie itself is a unique example of the tension between local governments over uneven oil and gas rules: The town is bifurcated by the border between Boulder and Weld counties. Since the 26-well Draco pad is proposed on the Weld County side of town, Erie's 2,000-foot setback does not apply. Lateral well bores snaking from the site to the west would extend under a quarter of Erie, one of the state's fastest-growing towns.

**"To have fracking that close would be a shame — it could actually decrease the value of homes."
~ Brie Fowler, real estate agent and Erie resident**

The regulatory mismatch raises thorny public health and safety questions for residents and Erie officials. Among them are the risk posed by record-long well bores that would run contiguous to existing wells, as well as the dusty 20-acre pad site's location on the outskirts of a planned 3,100-residence development with homes priced between \$500,000 and \$1.5 million.

Erie annexed the land for what's known as [Westerly](#) in 2020 and 1,000 residents are expected to live there by 2026. At least 50 homes are currently under construction. And the town has plans on file showing that about 40 houses will be built within 2,000 feet of the proposed pad. A school, park and trails system will be uphill from the site, which is already occupied by an oil and gas operation.

Residents who live in Westerly's newly finished single-family residences and townhomes, some across the street from a pool, realized nearby oil and gas operations were a possibility — they were mentioned in sale documents. Yet they said they were unaware where the Draco pad would be constructed and how big it would be.

"I purchased here because it's one of the most unique neighborhoods in Erie, with all the parks and resort-style amenities," said Brie Fowler, a real estate agent and Colorado native who was among the first to move into homes perched high on a hill.

"To have fracking that close would be a shame — it could actually decrease the value of homes."