ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND PRACTICES TO REDUCE RISK AND LIABILITY DURING OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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Surface and near-surface environmental impacts are a major issue affecting petroleum and natural gas exploration and development in the Western Canadian Basin. Preparation for drilling and related site development activities should address, provision for and include accountable measures to reduce or mitigate major disturbance impacts. The benefits of a well-planned, transparent, responsive and sensitive approach to drilling operations will reduce environmental risk, optimize exploration and development progress and minimize post drilling concerns and issues. Today’s petroleum geologist and landman have important roles to play in “environmental due diligence” during exploration and development.

This talk will focus on present and changing attitudes to environmental issues, regulatory compliance needs and processes, and performance objectives for petroleum exploration and development programs. The concept and practice of a corporate environmental management system and plan will be introduced as the best measure to reduce or manage risk. The talk will be of interest to geologists, landmen and those with field operational responsibilities. Generic examples and case history information from Alberta will be presented.