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Outstanding oil and gas operations honored by COGCC

DENVER, Colo. – Williams Production RMT, Encana Oil & Gas (USA) and Anadarko Petroleum Corporation were each recognized today by the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission for operational excellence in a range of oil and gas-related programs during 2009.

The ConcoPhillips Company and Energen Resources Corporation also were honored with one of the COGCC's 14th Annual Operators Awards. Colorado Department of Natural Resources executive director Mike King presented the awards during Thursday's luncheon at the Colorado Oil and Gas Association's Rocky Mountain Energy Epicenter 2010 conference at the Colorado Convention Center.

“During the past 10 years, oil and gas operators in Colorado have dramatically changed how they develop natural gas resources to better protect their neighbors and Colorado's environment,” said King, who is also a member of the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission. “These awards acknowledge industry's ongoing efforts and applaud the can-do spirit that oil and gas workers bring to their jobs every day.”

Each year since 1996, the COGCC has singled out members of the oil and gas industry in Colorado to recognize excellence in several operational, environmental and community involvement categories. This year five operators were honored for eight separate projects.

For its 2009 operations, Williams Production RMT won two awards, including one for the company's innovative pit liner recycling program.

In response to new requirements for disposing of pit liners, Williams developed a recycling program that converts these large, bulky polyethylene liners into non-food plastic products and fuel for cement kilns. The company recycled 35 liners during 2009, which minimized waste, reduced truck traffic and conserved landfill space. With more than 600 exploration and production pits in Garfield County that will eventually need to be closed, a recycling program like the one Williams has pioneered could significantly reduce the pressure on regional landfills with a cost-effective and environmentally sound alternative.

Williams was also recognized for reclamation excellence following the installation of a pipeline gathering line for the Williams Gas Plant in the Parachute Creek Valley. The project required

special engineering, helicopters and a healthy application of manpower to reclaim and revegetate the line, which cut across a remote escarpment.

Encana Oil & Gas (USA) also won two awards, the first for a topsoil management program that separates and stockpiles different types of excavated topsoils to enhance the reestablishment of soil microbial communities which are important for successful revegetation. Stockpiling soils in windrows not only helped reduce the loss of native material, the windrows did double-duty as noise and visual barriers and were often configured to manage stormwater runoff.

Encana's second award recognized the integration of visual impact mitigation into the company's Piceance Basin surface management operations. The company combines temporary soil colorants to disguise freshly graded slopes with careful landscaping to reduce erosion potential and help infrastructure fade into the landscape.

Anadarko won acclaim for its production facility redesign, which handles eight producing wells with one "Quad" separator located within a single enclosed building. The consolidated redesign reduces the facility footprint by 40 percent. It also makes it easier for Anadarko to deploy liners to protect ground water, add vapor recovery units to reduce flaming volumes and improve containment design at oil hauling tank connections. And it saves the company money.

Anadarko also won recognition for its community relations program, which hosts field tours of its drilling and fracture stimulation operations in the DJ Basin for lawmakers, agency officials and for county fire, planning and public health officials regarding safety standards and other important facets of Anadarko operations.

In southwestern Colorado, ConocoPhillips launched an aggressive inspection program to identify corrosion at its coal bed methane production facilities in the San Juan Basin. The company inspected 45 facilities and found 16 sufficiently damaged to require repair. ConocoPhillips also installed solar-powered continuous corrosion inhibitor injection equipment, significantly reducing corrosion-related failures in the company's Colorado and adjacent New Mexico facilities.

Energen Resources Corporation, a smaller operator also operating in southwestern Colorado, was honored for its pairing of a closed-loop drilling system with an aggressive cuttings handling process at its Archuleta County locations. It can often be challenging for smaller operators to integrate new practices into their drilling programs but this strategy provided Energen with a cost-effective method for maintaining appropriate drilling mud consistency while reducing water transport costs and significantly reducing the risk of a spill.

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