

On Monday, April 25th at 4:17 A.M. the first of five earthquakes were detected in Mahoning Township, Lawrence County near a well pad owned and operated by Hilcorp Energy Company (Hilcorp). The well pad has four wells. Fracking and stimulation activities had begun at the well pad on March 30th. The fracking and stimulation activities were completed on two of the wells and the other two wells were nearing the end of the fracking and stimulation process when the earthquakes occurred. Hilcorp voluntarily discontinued operations and sent personnel and equipment to another location. DEP dispatched an inspector to the site on Tuesday, April 26th to confirm that there was no activity or equipment at the well pad.

The initial recordings of earthquake events ranged from a 1.8 M (magnitude) to a 2.4 M. In general, seismic events are described as: *Great – 8 and above, Major – Greater than 7, Strong – Great than 6; Moderate – Greater than 5; Light – Greater than 4; Minor – Greater than 3; and Micro – 3 or less.* Micro-seismic events may go unnoticed by the public or could be detectable as slight vibrations.

The Department, in conjunction with DCNR are investigating the events and meeting with Hilcorp officials to review data. The investigation is on-going and will not end until definitive conclusions can be drawn about the incident. It is not known at this time when that will be. DEP will issue a report detailing the conclusions of the investigation.