

# Continental Resources prepares technique that is the first of its kind in Oklahoma

Continental Resources Inc. is taking advantage of a newly changed state law to drill a horizontal well nearly two miles long.

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**WATONGA** — Continental Resources Inc. is trying out new drilling techniques in Oklahoma, thanks to a recent change in state law.

A Cactus Drilling Co. crew is expected to begin drilling the Toms 1-21XH well Friday in Blaine County.

Rick Muncrief, Continental's senior vice president of operations, said the horizontal portion of the well will be nearly two miles long, stretching across two 640-acre sections just north of State Highway 33 east of Watonga.

He said the technique is expected to turn two marginally economic projects into an economic one by exposing more resource rock, while causing less disruption to the environment since Continental will be drilling off one well pad instead of two.

Muncrief said multiunit wells are common in North Dakota, where Continental is the leading oil producer in the prolific Bakken Shale, but the company is among the first to try the technique in Oklahoma.

State law was modified this year to recognize such new drilling techniques.

“Traditionally, the law protecting the rights of all involved was based primarily on drilling, completion and production in a vertical hole, or if there was a horizontal well, it involved a relatively short lateral,” Oklahoma Corporation Commissioner Dana Murphy told *The Oklahoman* in May. “Obviously, horizontal drilling using laterals that run thousands of feet brings new concerns and issues.”

Murphy said she expected the energy reform law, House Bill 1909, to increase new drilling activity in Oklahoma.

Continental's Blaine County well will take up to 60 days to drill, since the bit must bore through nearly 10,000 feet of dense rock in the Anadarko Woodford formation. The well also will be about 10,000 feet deep.

Muncrief said it likely will take about three months for Continental to assess how well the multiunit well worked, but he is optimistic about the technique's performance in Oklahoma.

Continental could drill as many as nine more multiunit wells in 2012, if the technique proves successful.

“We're encouraged by what we're seeing,” Muncrief said.

He said he thinks other oil and natural gas companies active in western Oklahoma will adopt Continental's methods if the multiunit technique works as expected.

“It's hard for someone like me not to get excited by the potential, the opportunity for our state,” the oil and natural gas industry veteran said.

Muncrief also said Continental could drill additional wells from the same unit, if the prospect proves to be economical. Four wells may be necessary to adequately drain the reservoir.

He said Continental has exposed up to eight miles of reservoir rock from one site in North Dakota.

“Time will tell if we can do that here,” he said.



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