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Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin has formed a committee to study the recent uptick in earthquakes within her state that researchers have linked to oil and gas development. The Coordinating Council on Seismic Activity includes representatives from the Oklahoma Geological Survey, academia, state regulators, and the oil and gas industry. The council will be led by State Energy and Environment Secretary Michael Teague.

In the past nine months, Oklahoma has experienced abnormally frequent earthquakes with more magnitude-3.0 earthquakes than California and even some magnitude-4.0 earthquakes, which can cause damage to buildings and infrastructure. The U.S. Geological Survey and Oklahoma Geological Survey have reported that increased oil and gas production, specifically the disposal of wastewater associated with production, is likely a contributor to the increased seismic activity.

Critics have expressed concern that Gov. Fallin is not doing enough to address the issue. Senator Jerry Ellis (D-OK) called for the committee to include national experts on induced seismicity, and argued that there is a lack of urgency in the governor's actions. More information on induced seismicity can be found in a recent study by the National Academies.

Sources: E&E News, Press Office of Governor Mary Fallin
