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Press Release - For Immediate Release October 20, 2014

West Texas Energy Consortium Looking Forward to Upcoming Year
Regional collaborative to address workforce development, first responder needs

Abilene/San Angelo – October 20, 2014: After a successful first year under Consortium Chairman and former Texas Railroad Commissioner Victor G. Carrillo, the West Texas Energy Consortium (WTxEC) is working to bring even more opportunities and resources to West Texas communities impacted by oil and gas growth. A newly launched membership structure will offer conference and workshop discounts, members-only networking events, and website access to an internal resource library featuring contact lists, reports, chat forums, meeting minutes, and more for a nominal yearly fee.

Two hot topic initiatives are also underway. In conjunction with the University of Houston (UH), through a project funded by Shell, the WTxEC is developing first responder safety training to better equip local, and heavily rural, volunteer fire and emergency medical service departments around West Texas where much of the oil and gas drilling takes place. "The tremendous increase in oil and gas activity has placed increased demands on first responders," says Dr. Raymond Cline of the UH College of Technology, "It is important that they have the proper awareness, training and equipment that prepares them to best serve their communities and the industry. We have been engaged by Shell to assist with this process. We are partnering with Wild Well Control and the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) on this project. Oil and gas operators around the world rely on Wild Well for engineered solutions that safely prevent and resolve well control incidents. While the H-GAC Cooperative Purchasing Program assists local governments in reducing costs through a government-to-government procurement service which is available nationwide. We believe a strong partnership provides focus and innovative solutions." The first step to evaluate and inventory local programs and operating equipment is already in progress. Danny Updike, Executive Director for Concho Valley Regional Advisory Council (CVRAC) and a WTxEC member, says "Assessing what resources are available, and providing training, will be extremely valuable to our mostly volunteer first responders. They are the first to arrive if something happens and we need to do everything we can to assist them."

FOR RELEASE MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2014

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Our second initiative is occurring in an effort to address key workforce development and training needs. The Consortium and participating colleges are embarking on a unique regional alignment initiative for oil and gas related education/training programs. The regional alignment process during this upcoming year will focus on welding, a high-demand skill as the energy industry continues to expand. The process will also seek to ensure both transparency and transferability among regional education partners.

For more information on upcoming projects, meetings, and events please visit www.wtxec.org or contact our staff at 325-795-4206/info@wtxec.org.