

EAST BAY TIMES

Alameda County fracking ban moves forward

By Denis Cuffdcuff
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HAYWARD -- A plan to ban fracking in Alameda County won the unanimous support Tuesday of county planning commissioners as a safeguard to protect ground water from pollution.

In a recommendation to county supervisors, the Planning Commission voted 6-0 to endorse a ban on fracking and other high intensity oil drilling methods.

Alameda County is on pace to become the first of nine Bay Area counties to ban fracking, a practice using pressurized water and chemicals to extract oil from tightly packed geological formations.

Other Northern California counties -- Santa Cruz and San Benito -- already have bans, and environmentalists are working on drafting one in Santa Clara County.

The ban was supported by a coalition of environmental groups, including the Sierra Club, Food and Water Watch and the Center for Biological Diversity.

The only oil driller in Alameda County -- E & B Natural Resources -- does not frack, but has raised concerns that some rules in the proposal would disrupt its 30-barrel-a-day oil production in eastern Livermore.