

Message Body:
Letter to the Editor

Mining the website for answers

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A Telegram headline on Oct. 9 was, "Nalcor releases pore pressure study."

The Ikon science manager was quoted: "Regional pressure studies help companies prepare for the unexpected, while at the same time building knowledge about the subsurface conditions."

And we, the people, were informed: "The study report is available on the Nalcor website."

I went to the website and found:

"The Regional Pore Pressure Study is a comprehensive evaluation of the subsurface pressure systems in Newfoundland and Labrador's eastern frontier slope and deepwater basins. The study region spans an offshore area from northern Labrador to the Flemish Pass in the south, including the newly discovered Chidley, Henley and Holten basins in the Labrador Sea. The analysis integrated well data and new regional seismic data that was compared to global analogues. The report is now released and available for free download on the Nalcor Energy website. [Click here for a copy of the report.](#)"

I clicked, and read in the executive report: "The objectives of the report are to provide (a) a framework for future drilling by helping to define the elements of the drilling window (pore and fracture pressure) and (b) to examine how pressure data may improve the quantification and exploration risk of future prospects by, for example, analysis of the risk for mechanical seal failure."

"Mechanical seal failure" caught my attention and I clicked for the full report only to be told "If you have already created an account with Nalcor Energy, please enter your email address and password below to receive a free copy of the full report. If you do not have an account, please create an account by clicking [here.](#)"

I ask: why does Nalcor keep track who reads their reports?

I then looked for information on "pore pressure" and found Jincai Zhang's 2011 article in Earth Science Reviews. "(i) Pore pressures in most deep sedimentary formations are not hydrostatic; instead they are overpressured and elevated even to more than double of the hydrostatic pressure. If the abnormal pressures are not accurately predicted prior to drilling, catastrophic incidents, such as well blowouts and mud volcanoes, may take place."

After all this, I realized the buzz words "safer operations" in Nalcor's Oct. 9 press release refer to catastrophic incidents, such as well blowouts and mud volcanoes. No wonder the content of the press release was vague.

Penny Allderdice