

# Seismic Studies in Carbon Sequestration for Enhanced Oil Recovery

## Using Teledyne Isco Syringe Pumps

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### Abstract

Both CO<sub>2</sub>-based enhanced oil recovery (EOR) and CO<sub>2</sub> geological sequestration involve injecting CO<sub>2</sub> into deep rocks. Currently, it is unclear what the short and long term effects may be, or what changes may occur in these rocks, as a result of injecting CO<sub>2</sub>, especially if the rocks are composed of carbonates. At the University of North Dakota Petroleum Engineering Lab, Teledyne Isco syringe pumps were used to provide needed pressures to simulate conditions encountered in deep petroleum reservoirs and saline aquifers, and to control flow rates accurately during experimental investigation of CO<sub>2</sub> phase-transition-induced seismic velocity changes.

### Overview

Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) has been injected into mature petroleum reservoirs for enhanced oil recovery since the early 1970s<sup>1</sup>. Storing CO<sub>2</sub> in geological formations is considered one of the most effective options for carbon management<sup>2</sup>. In both cases, CO<sub>2</sub> is assumed to be in the supercritical state. However, geological complexity might change the CO<sub>2</sub> state from supercritical to subcritical, which could eventually ruin the EOR and sequestration projects<sup>3</sup>. To prevent this from occurring, a tool that can be used to monitor both the space distribution and the phase status of the stored CO<sub>2</sub> is needed. Experiments were designed to investigate seismic imaging as a tool to monitor CO<sub>2</sub> phase transition. This technical note presents how Isco pumps were used in the research.

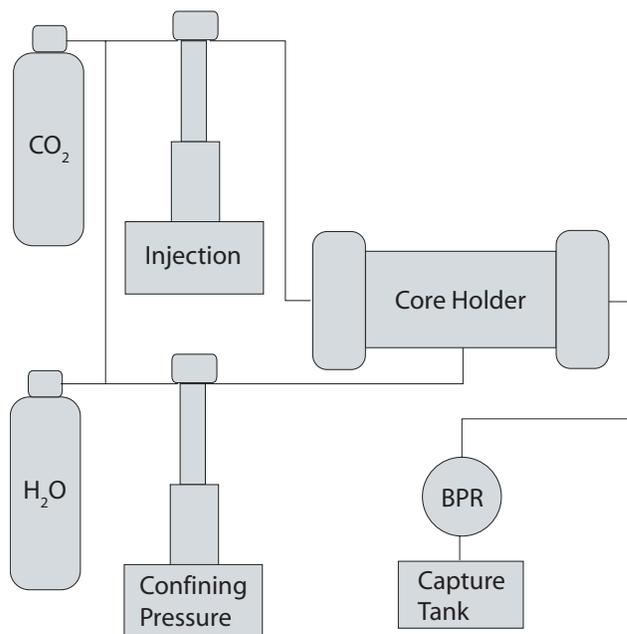
### Seismic Imaging

Seismic imaging has been considered one of the most promising methods for monitoring injected hydraulic fracturing fluid and CO<sub>2</sub> in petroleum reservoir formations<sup>4</sup>. In order to investigate the possibility of using seismic velocity change as an indicator for CO<sub>2</sub> phase transition, the Petroleum Engineering Lab at the University of North Dakota developed a system that can be used to measure the compressional (P-) and shear (S-) wave velocities while the rock sample is being flooded by CO<sub>2</sub> under controlled pressure and temperature conditions and deep reservoir in-situ stress fields<sup>4</sup>. In this research, an Indiana limestone sample saturated with CO<sub>2</sub> was heated and then cooled across the CO<sub>2</sub> critical temperature while the pore pressure was maintained above the critical pressure and the confining pressure was kept constant. Seismic velocities were measured during the heating and cooling process.

### Isco Pump Application

Isco pumps played a critical role in this research. One Isco pump (model 500D) was used for CO<sub>2</sub> injection to accurately control the flow rate; another pump (model 260D) was used to keep constant confining pressure while the rock was being heated and cooled across the critical point of CO<sub>2</sub>. Figure 1 below shows the arrangement of pumps and other CO<sub>2</sub> handling apparatus in the experiment.

On the last page, Table 1 compares detailed technical specifications of these and other Isco pumps.

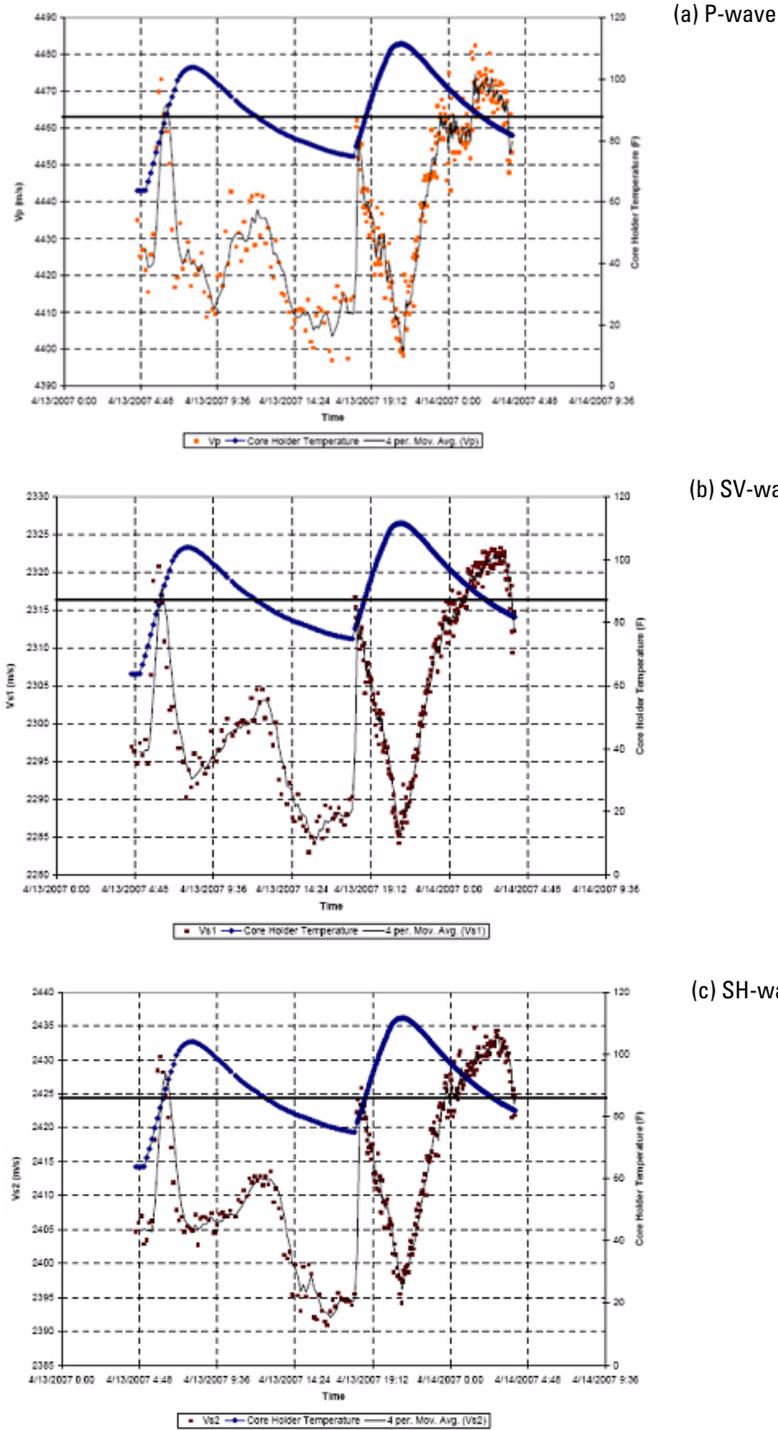


**Figure 1: Isco pump application** in CO<sub>2</sub> phase-transition-induced seismic velocity change experiments

## Research results

The experiments clearly showed that seismic velocity changes occurred as a result of CO<sub>2</sub> phase transition. Figure 2 shows the observed velocity changes of

compressional (P-), vertical shear (SV-), and horizontal shear (SH-) waves during this process.<sup>5</sup>



**Figure 2: CO<sub>2</sub> phase-transition-induced seismic velocity change in Indiana limestone:**

**(a) compressional (P) wave, (b) vertical shear (SV) wave, and (c) horizontal shear (SH) wave.**

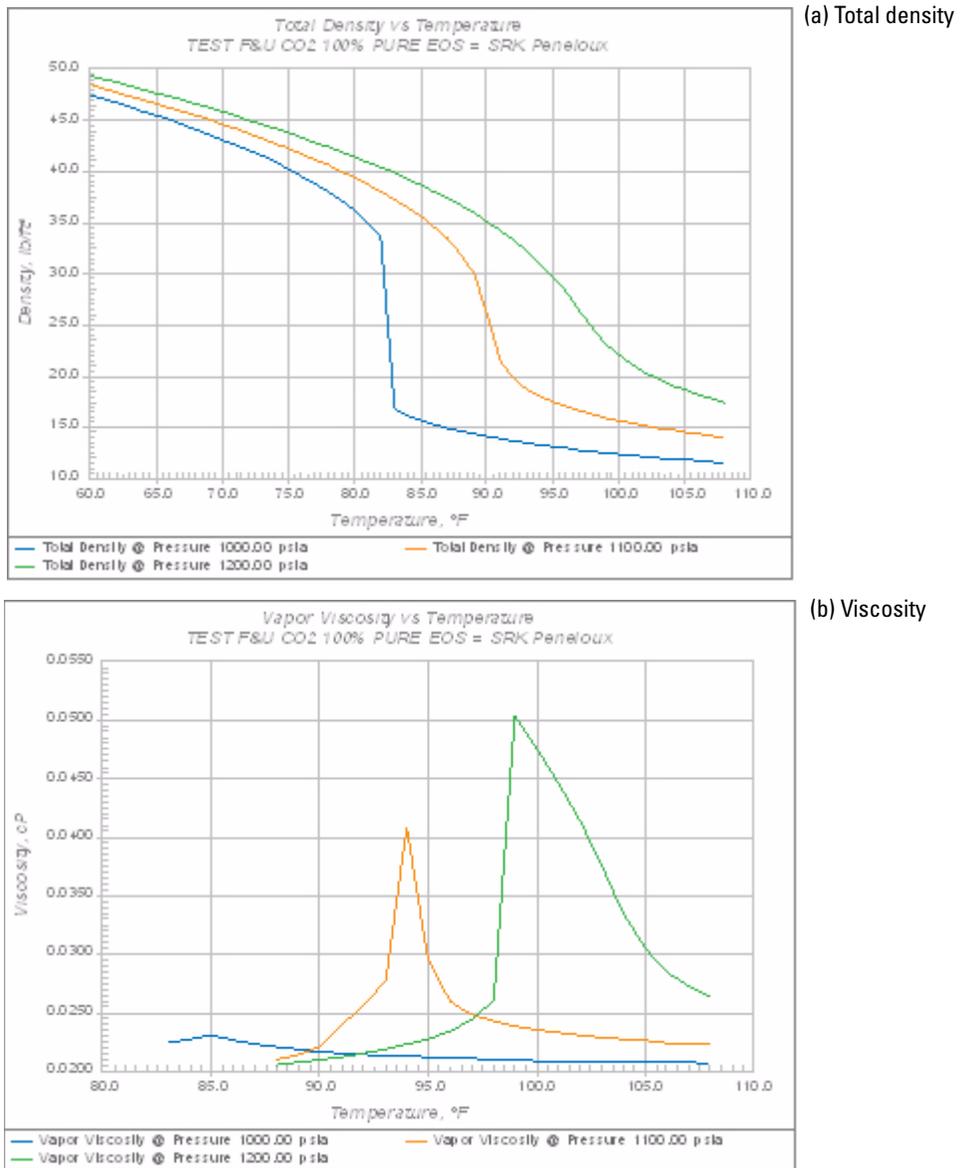
(Reprinted with the permission of the American Rock Mechanics Association.<sup>5</sup>)

## Discussion

Because velocities of dry rock only change linearly and slightly with temperature<sup>4</sup>, the observed nonlinear velocity changes in Figure 2 are mainly due to CO<sub>2</sub>. CO<sub>2</sub> properties, especially density and viscosity, are very sensitive to temperature change near the critical point, as shown in Figure 3. Therefore, it can be concluded that

the seismic velocity changes observed in Figure 2 are induced by CO<sub>2</sub> phase transition.

During the CO<sub>2</sub> EOR/sequestration experiments, the Teledyne Isco syringe pumps were not only able to handle different types of fluids, but also allowed for accurate measurements and control of flow rate, volume, and pressure.



**Figure 3: CO<sub>2</sub> total density (a) and viscosity (b) with temperature at three pressures** (Reprinted with the permission of the American Rock Mechanics Association.<sup>5</sup>)

**Table 1: Commonly Recommended Pumps**

	<b>500D</b>	<b>500HP</b>	<b>260D</b>	<b>100DX</b>	<b>100DM</b>
Flow Range (ml/min)	0.001 - 204	0.001 - 204	0.001 - 107	0.00001 - 60	0.00001 - 30
Pressure Range (psi)	0 - 3,750	0 - 5,000	0 - 7,500	0 - 10,000	0 - 10,000

## References

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- 4) Zeng, Z. 2006. Multipurpose Tri-axial Core Flooding System. Research Report, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota, USA.
- 5) Zeng, Z., Jakupi, A., Bigelow, T., Grigg, R.B., Kringstad, J., Belobraydic, M., and Zhou, X. 2008. Laboratory Observation of CO<sub>2</sub> Phase Transition Induced Seismic Velocity Change, paper ARMA08-329, Proc. 42nd US Rock Mechanics Symposium and 2nd U.S.-Canada Rock Mechanics Symposium, San Francisco, June 29-July 2.

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