Well Sample and Core Library

The increase in the price of oil on the world market has had a direct impact on the amount of activity at the KGS Well Sample and Core Library. Higher oil prices have made increased exploration economically feasible. Investors and the energy industry are once again looking at deeper plays in sparsely drilled areas, Devonian black shales, and tar-sand deposits in Kentucky. Exploration geologists are examining cores and cuttings available at the library from wells drilled in the 1960's, 1970's, and 1980's as they again gather information, interpret geology, and identify potential hydrocarbon prospects. Given the high costs of drilling, it is much more cost-efficient to examine samples and cores already on file at the library than to drill again in order to acquire these data.

Although many tools are available to assist in the exploration for oil, gas, coal, lead, zinc, and other minerals, the examination of rock samples and cores provides the greatest single source of information. Samples and cores are also the best sources of information about the nature and occurrence of rocks beneath the earth's surface.

Such samples and cores are of great value to industries and researchers as new methods, technologies, and instruments for examination and analysis are developed. The preservation of data in such sample and core facilities helps to avoid duplicate exploration work.

Fiscal year 2006-7:
✓ Over 760 telephone requests for information were received
✓ More than 300 researchers, geologists, consultants, and students visited the library
✓ More than 250,000 feet of core and well cuttings were examined
✓ More than 430,000 feet of core and well cuttings from 133 oil wells were added to the collection

Ray Daniel (right) of the Well Sample and Core Library talks to University of Kentucky petroleum geology students about the use of well samples in exploration and research.

Patrick Gooding, manager of the Well Sample and Core Library, shows examples of cores and well cuttings available at the library to the KGS Advisory Board.

Members of the KGS Advisory Board tour the rows of sample and core boxes at the core library.