

STATE OIL AND GAS BOARD OF ALABAMA GOVERNING COALBED METHANE GAS  
OPERATIONS  
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

CHAPTER 400-3-4  
DRILLING

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400-3-4-.01      Identification Of Wells.

A sign shall be posted and maintained in a legible state in a conspicuous place near the well. Such sign shall be posted before scudding or reentry and shall remain posted until the well is plugged and abandoned and the location restored. The sign shall include the name of the operator, the permit number, the well name and number, and the section, township, range, and county in which the well is located.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History:** Filed August 7, 1984. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

**Ed. Note:** See history note at end of chapter.

**400-3-4-.02      Protection Of Freshwater Resources.**

An operator shall conduct all oil and gas operations in a manner so as to prevent the pollution of all freshwater resources. All fresh waters and waters of present or probable future value for domestic, municipal, commercial, stock, or agricultural purposes shall be confined to their respective strata and shall be adequately protected. Special precautions shall be taken to guard against any loss of artesian water from the strata in which it occurs, and the contamination of fresh water by objectionable water, oil, condensate, gas, or other deleterious substance to such fresh water.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History:** Filed August 7, 1984. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

**Ed. Note:** See history note at end of chapter.

**400-3-4-.03      Well Record.**

(1) During drilling, completing, and workover operations on every permitted well, the owner, operator, contractor, driller, or other person responsible for the conduct of drilling operations, shall notify the Supervisor prior to performing the following activities: setting surface casing, running intermediate or production casing, perforating or slotting casing, drillstem testing (see Rule 400-1-5-.01), wireline logging or surveying, and coring. Such persons shall keep a detailed and accurate record of the well, reduced to writing from day to day, which shall be accessible to the Board and its agents at all times. Pertinent information from such records shall be furnished to the Board within thirty (30) days after completion, or at such time as prescribed by the Supervisor. Said information shall include but not be limited to: drilling contractor; spud date; ground level, derrick floor, and kelly bushing elevations surveyed by a licensed land surveyor; total depth; kick-off point depths and directions of any sidetracks; bottom-hole location; casing and liner record; cement record; squeeze cement record; perforation record; tubing record; the depth and type of any plugs or packers set; wellstimulation and treatment record; drillstem test record; and a record of all wireline logging, sampling, and coring operations for said well. This information shall be submitted on the appropriate Form OGB-6, OGB-7, and OGB-8.

(2) One (1) copy of all electrical, mechanical, radioactive, and dipmeter logs or such other surveys performed as a part of drilling, completing, or workover operations shall be submitted to the Board within thirty (30) days after completion. In addition to filing either blue or black line log copies, all available digital log data in a Log ASCII Standard (LAS) format shall be filed with the Board. One (1) copy of all drillstem test results shall be submitted along with Form OGB-7 within thirty (30) days after completion. A complete set of washed (mud-logger) cuttings, if available, correctly labeled and identified as to depth, shall be filed with the Board within thirty (30) days from the time of completion of any well unless otherwise approved by the Supervisor. If cores are taken, a complete set of cores, either whole or at least quarter slabs, correctly labeled and identified as to depth, shall be filed with the Board within three (3) months from the time of completion of any well unless otherwise approved by the Supervisor; provided, however, that an operator may obtain an exception to this requirement upon submission of an affidavit certifying that the operator:

(a) will store and maintain core from the well at a specified location or facility and provide the name, address and telephone number of the facility where the cores are stored;

(b) will provide the Board access to the core upon request and provide the name, address and telephone number of the person to handle such request;

(c) will provide the core to the Board if the operator should cease maintaining and storing said core; and

(d) will submit the core to the Board within one (1) year from the time of completion of the well. Additionally, the Supervisor may allow the filing of materials representative of the cored interval in lieu of filing whole or slab core if the Supervisor determines there is adequate core coverage in an area or for some other reason.

(3) If the operator so requests in writing, all logs, cuttings, cores, core analyses, cored intervals, and formation depths from a well shall be kept confidential for a period of six (6) months from the completion of such well.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History:** Filed August 7, 1984. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000. **Amended:** Filed August 5, 2005; effective September 9, 2005.

**Ed. Note:** See history note at end of chapter.

**400-3-4-.04      Directional Surveys.**

If required by this rule, a directional survey, which may include logging while drilling (LWD) or measurement while drilling (MWD) logs, shall be run and one (1) copy thereof filed by the operator with the Supervisor within thirty (30) days after completion of a well. Directional surveys shall be run from total depth to base of surface casing or the kickoff point, whichever is shallowest, unless otherwise approved by the Supervisor. However, directional surveys to total depth shall be unnecessary in cases where the interval below the survey is less than five hundred (500) feet. In such an instance, a projection of the latest survey shall satisfy Board requirements. In the event the proposed or final location of the producing interval of the directionally controlled well is not in accordance with spacing or other rules of the Board applicable to the reservoir, proper applications shall be made to obtain approval of exceptions to such rules. Such approval shall be granted, or denied, at the discretion of the Board, after notice and hearing. Directional surveys shall be run when:

(1) The well is directionally controlled and is thereby intentionally deflected from the vertical; or

(2) The well is drilled as an exceptional location and such directional survey is ordered by the Board.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History:** Filed August 7, 1984. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000. **Amended:** Filed August 5, 2005; effective September 9, 2005.

**Ed. Note:** See history note at end of chapter.

**400-3-4-.05      Abandonment Of Radioactive Logging Sources.**

(1) The Supervisor shall be notified immediately of the loss of any radioactive logging source in a well.

(2) No radioactive source used for logging may be left in a well without written consent of the Supervisor.

(3) When it is determined by the operator that it may be necessary to leave a radioactive source in a well, the Supervisor must be notified in writing of such and a plan of the abandonment procedure submitted to the Supervisor for approval. This plan must be approved by the Alabama Department of Public Health (Division of Radiation Control) and any other agency that has jurisdiction.

(4) Wells in which radioactive sources are abandoned shall be mechanically equipped so as to prevent the accidental or intentional mechanical disintegration of the radioactive source.

(a) Such sources being abandoned in the bottom of a well shall be covered with a substantial standard color-dyed cement plug on top of which a whipstock or other mechanical device approved by the Supervisor shall be set. Such dye shall be so as to alert a re-entry operator prior to encountering such source.

(b) In wells where a logging source has been cemented in place behind a casing string and above total depth, upon abandonment, a standard color-dyed cement plug shall be placed opposite the abandoned source and a whipstock or other mechanical device approved by the Supervisor placed on top of the plug.

(c) In the event the operator finds that, after expending a reasonable effort, because of hole conditions, it is not possible to abandon the sources as prescribed in (a) or (b) above, prior to ceasing efforts to so abandon, he must obtain Board approval to cease such efforts and obtain approval for an alternate abandonment procedure.

(d) When a logging source must be abandoned in a producing zone, a standard color-dyed cement plug shall be set and a whipstock or other mechanical device approved by the Supervisor placed above to direct the sidetrack at least fifteen (15) feet away from the source.

(5) Any well in which a radioactive source is left in the hole, shall have a visual warning sign posted and maintained in a legible state, in a conspicuous place near the well. The sign shall depict the trefoil radiation symbol with a radioactive warning.

(6) Upon permanent abandonment, any well in which a radioactive source is left in the hole shall have a permanent plaque attached to the top of the casing left in the hole in such a manner that re-entry cannot be accomplished without disturbing the plaque. This plaque shall serve as a visual warning to any person reentering the hole that a radioactive source has been abandoned in-place in the well. The plaque shall depict the trefoil radiation symbol with a radioactive warning and shall be constructed of a long lasting material such as monel, stainless steel, or brass. This marker shall bear the following information: well name, permit number, surface location, name of the operator, the source of material abandoned in the well, the total well depth, depth at which the source is abandoned, plug-back depth, the date of the abandonment of the source, the activity of the source, and a warning not to drill below the plug-back depth.

(7) If an operator desires to reenter, convert, recompleate, or rework a well in which a radioactive source used for logging is present, the applicant operator must have his plan of operation approved by the Supervisor and any other agency that has jurisdiction before such reentry, conversion, recompleation, and reworking application is granted.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History:** Filed August 7, 1984. **Amended:** Filed May 4, 1990.

**Repealed and New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

**Ed. Note:** See history note at end of chapter.

#### **400-3-4-.06      Operations Involving Radioactive Material.**

An operator shall obtain approval from the Supervisor, the Alabama Department of Public Health (Division of Radiation Control) and any other agency that has jurisdiction before introducing any radioactive material, exclusive of radioactive logging devices, into the substrata for the purpose of conducting a tracer survey or for any other reason.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History:** **New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

#### **400-3-4-.07      Chemically Treating Or Fracturing A Well.**

Wells shall not be chemically treated or fractured until the approval of the Supervisor is obtained. Each well shall be treated or fractured in such manner as will not cause damage to the formation, result in water encroachment into the oil- or gas-bearing formation, or endanger freshwater-bearing strata. Necessary precautions shall be taken to prevent damage to the casing. Routine chemical treatments for corrosion control shall be excluded from this notice requirement. If chemical treating or fracturing results in irreparable damage to the well, the oil or gas-bearing formation or freshwater-bearing strata, then the well shall be properly plugged and abandoned.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History:** **New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

#### **400-3-4-.08      Report Of Well Treatment.**

Within thirty (30) days after the chemical treating or fracturing of a well, a report shall be filed with the Board in triplicate by

the operator on Form OGB-6 setting forth in detail the method used in treating the well.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History: New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

#### **400-3-4-.09      Casing, Cementing, And Test Pressure Requirements.**

(1) The operator shall case and cement all wells with a sufficient number of strings in a manner necessary to:

- (a) prevent communication between separate hydrocarbon-bearing strata (except such strata approved for commingling) and between hydrocarbon and water-bearing strata;
- (b) prevent contamination of freshwater-bearing strata;
- (c) support unconsolidated sediments; and
- (d) otherwise provide a means of controlling formation pressures and fluids.

(2) The operator shall install casing that meets American Petroleum Institute (API) standards. Standard cement shall be used and shall be mixed with water of adequate quality so as not to degrade the setting properties. Safety factors in casing program design shall be of sufficient magnitude to provide optimum well control while drilling and to assure safe operations for the life of the well.

- (a) **Surface Casing.** The minimum amount of surface casing to be set below ground level, the cement requirements and the test pressure requirements shall be determined from Table 1.

**TABLE 1**

<b>Proposed True Vertical Depth (TVD) (ft)</b>	<b>Minimum Casing Required (ft)</b>	<b>Cement required</b>	<b>Surface test-pressure (psi)</b>
0 - 4,000	300	Circulate to surface	300
4,001 - 5,000	400	Circulate to surface	600
5,001 - 6,000	600	Circulate to surface	800
6,001 - 7,000	800	Circulate to surface	1,000
7,001 - 8,000	1,000	Circulate to surface	1,000
8,001 - 9,000	1,400	Circulate to surface	1,000

Greater than 9,000	1,800	Circulate to surface	1,500
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The Supervisor may specify surface casing requirements other than those set forth in Table 1 if such requirements are needed to provide for increased protection of freshwater resources

(b) **Production Casing.** All producing wells shall be completed with a production string of casing that shall be properly cemented at a sufficient depth adequate to protect the methane bearing coalbeds.

1. For cased hole completions or cased/open hole completions, casing shall be cemented in place with a calculated volume of cement sufficient to fill the annular space at least two hundred (200) feet above the top of the uppermost coalbed which is to be completed, except that the annular space adjacent to a coalbed or coalbeds may be left uncemented.

2. For open hole completions, the bottom of production casing shall be set not more than one hundred (100) feet above the depth of the uppermost coalbed which the operator intends to complete, unless prior approval is granted by the Supervisor. The casing shall be cemented with a calculated volume of cement sufficient to fill the annular space at least two hundred (200) feet above the base of the casing.

(c) The Supervisor may approve an alternative casing program upon written justification by the operator.

(3) If there are indications of inadequate primary cementing (such as lost returns, cement channeling, or mechanical failure of equipment) of the surface or production casing strings, the operator shall evaluate the adequacy of the cementing operations by pressure testing the casing shoe, running a cement bond log or a cement evaluation tool log, running a temperature survey, or a combination thereof before continuing operations. If the evaluation indicates inadequate cementing, the operator shall re-cement or take other actions as approved by the Supervisor. The operator shall verify the adequacy of the remedial cementing operations as described above.

(4) **Pressure Testing.** An operator shall give notice to the Supervisor prior to pressure testing.

(a) After primary cementing of surface casing, drilling shall not be resumed until a time lapse of twelve (12) hours under pressure. Cement is considered under pressure when one or more float valves are employed and are shown to be holding the cement in place or when other means of holding pressure are



used. After cementing and prior to drilling the plug, surface casing shall be pressure tested as set forth in Table 1 above. All pressure tests are to be held for thirty (30) minutes. If during this test period the pressure declines more than ten percent (10%) of the initial test pressure, then such corrective measures shall be taken to insure that the casing string is so set and cemented that it will hold the test pressure for thirty (30) minutes without a drop of more than ten percent (10%).

(b) Upon conclusion of the drilling of the well, or prior to the setting of production casing, the surface casing shall be re-tested in accordance with Rule 400-3-4-.09(2)(a) in order to verify the integrity of the casing string. This requirement will not apply if the well is permitted to be drilled to a total depth of less than six thousand (6,000) feet and no problems are encountered during the drilling of such well that would require a retest to verify the mechanical integrity of its surface casing string.

(c) After primary cementing of production casing, drilling shall not resume until a time lapse of twelve (12) hours under pressure. Cement is considered under pressure when one or more float valves are employed and are shown to be holding the cement in place or when other means of holding pressure are used. After cementing and prior to drilling the plug, production casing shall be pressure tested at a pressure of six hundred (600) pounds per square inch (psi), if the plug is to be drilled. All pressure tests are to be held for thirty (30) minutes. If during this test period the pressure declines more than ten percent (10%) of the initial test pressure, then corrective measures shall be taken to insure that the casing string is so set and cemented that it will hold the test pressure for thirty (30) minutes without a drop of more than ten percent (10%) unless otherwise approved by the Supervisor.

**(5) Recording Test Pressures.**

(a) Proper documentation of pressure tests, including beginning and ending pressures and the duration of each test shall be recorded in a daily drilling report.

(b) Unless witnessed by an agent of the Board, all pressure tests and retests shall be documented with a properly calibrated continuous pressure recorder or other pressure recording device acceptable to the Supervisor. A representative of the operator shall sign the pressure test record(s) following completion of each pressure test.

(c) The operator shall maintain all pressure test records at the well site during drilling operations. Such records shall be made available for inspection upon request.

(d) The operator shall maintain all pressure test records for a minimum of three (3) years from the date such pressure tests were conducted.

(6) **Reporting Test Pressures.** The operator shall report casing pressure tests on Form OGB-7.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History: New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

#### **400-3-4-.10      Pit Construction And Maintenance.**

(1) An operator shall obtain approval of the Supervisor prior to the construction of any pit to be used in conjunction with drilling, completion, and workover operations.

(2) All pits utilized to contain fluids during drilling, completion, and workover operations shall be constructed and maintained so as to prevent pollution of surface and ground water.

(3) Pits shall be constructed and maintained so as to contain fluids within the pit. No fluids shall be discharged from the pit except as allowed by appropriate permit(s) and regulation(s). The fluid level in such pits shall be kept at least two (2) feet below the top of the pit wall or dike.

(4) Pits shall be constructed and maintained so that no surface water or runoff will enter the pit.

(5) Operators should construct pits so that the bottom of the pit is above the seasonal high water table. If the pit cannot be constructed in such a manner, then the Supervisor shall require that the pit be lined with a material that is capable of retaining pit fluids or that other action be taken to insure the protection of ground water.

(6) Operators shall prevent materials that are not exempt under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act from entering the pit during drilling, completion, or workover operations.

(7) Prior to utilizing such pit, the pit shall be inspected by the operator who shall make a determination that said pit is constructed in a manner that will prevent the pollution of surface and ground water. The operator shall keep a record of the determination and shall provide a copy of said determination to the Board, upon request by the Supervisor. If requested by the Supervisor, an operator may be required to be available at the well location for a review of the determination as to whether or not the pit is in compliance with this rule.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History: New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

**400-3-4-.11      Recycling Or Disposal Of Pit Fluids And Pit Closure.**

(1) **Recycling or Disposal of Pit Fluids.** After a well is drilled, completed, or worked over all fluids that remain in pits shall be recycled or disposed of in a manner acceptable to the Supervisor within thirty (30) days of completion, unless otherwise approved by the Supervisor. Any oil that is present in the pit must be skimmed immediately after drilling operations cease and prior to the disposal of pit fluids and recycled or disposed of in accordance with appropriate permit(s) and regulations.

(2) **Pit Closure.** Within ninety (90) days after a well is drilled, completed, or worked over all pits shall be properly filled and compacted, unless otherwise approved by the Supervisor. Pits shall be backfilled with earth and compacted to the satisfaction of the Supervisor. After all fluids in such pits have been disposed of, the Supervisor may permit the operator to leave such pit for use by the landowner, if the surface owner requests in a written statement to the Board that the pit be left open. The written statement should include the intended use for the pit.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History: New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

**400-3-4-.12      Drilling Fluid.**

The use of drilling fluids shall not be required in the drilling of coalbed methane gas wells when other appropriate methods are available to control any pressure which may be encountered.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History: New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

**400-3-4-.13      Blow-Out Prevention.**

All operations shall be conducted in a manner to ensure continuous control of the well. Adequate well control equipment and procedures shall be used to prevent uncontrolled release of methane, produced water, completion fluids or other material during completion operations. The method of well control may consist of conventional blow-out preventers, stripper heads, and other methods that may be approved by the Supervisor.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History: New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

**400-3-4-.14      Plugging And Abandonment Of Wells.**

Any nonproductive well shall be plugged within thirty (30) days of completion unless said well has been classified as temporarily abandoned or shut in pursuant to Rule 400-3-4-.17. Any productive well that has not produced in six (6) months or any Class II injection well that has ceased operation for six (6) months shall be plugged within thirty (30) days unless said well has been classified as temporarily abandoned or shut in pursuant to Rule 400-3-4-.17. Before any work is commenced to plug and abandon any well drilled in search of oil and gas or utilized as a Class II injection well the operator shall provide the Supervisor with the proposed method and procedure to plug and abandon such well. Such method and procedure may be required in writing by the Supervisor. Also, the Supervisor may require that well records, including logs, be made available to determine if the proposed depths and lengths of plugs are adequate. Operations to plug and abandon a well shall not begin until approval of procedures has been obtained from the Supervisor. Unless otherwise allowed by the Supervisor, the operator shall notify the Supervisor at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the commencement of plugging operations so that said operation may be witnessed by an agent of the Board. The cement in all plugs shall be standard cement and shall be mixed with water of adequate quality so as not to degrade the setting properties. Unless specified otherwise by the Supervisor, the operator shall comply with the following requirements which apply to all wells drilled in search of coalbed methane gas or utilized as Class II injection wells.

**(1) Open Hole Completions.**

(a) **Uncompleted Wells.** A cement, concrete, or grout plug at least one hundred (100) feet in length shall be placed across the surface casing shoe.

(b) **Wells Without Production Casing.** A cement, concrete, or grout plug at least one hundred (100) feet in length shall be placed above the uppermost producing coalbed or injection zone.

(c) **Wells With Production Casing.** A cement, concrete, or grout plug at least one hundred (100) feet in length shall be placed at least fifty (50) feet below and shall extend to at least fifty (50) feet above the production casing shoe.

**(2) Cased Hole Completions.**

(a) **Perforated Wells.** A perforated well shall be plugged by one of the following methods:

1. A permanent-type bridge plug shall be placed above the uppermost perforation or injection zone and a cement, concrete or grout plug not less than one hundred (100) feet in length shall be placed atop the bridge plug.

2. A permanent-type bridge plug shall be placed above the uppermost perforation or injection zone and at least fifty (50) feet below the surface casing shoe, and the well shall be filled from the bridge plug to land surface with cement, concrete, or grout.

(b) **Unperforated Wells.** An unperforated well shall be plugged by one of the following methods:

1. If records indicate production casing has been cemented, a permanent-type bridge plug shall be placed inside production casing at a depth of at least two hundred (200) feet, and the well shall be filled from the bridge plug to land surface with cement, concrete, or grout.

2. If records do not indicate production casing has been cemented, freshwater shall be pumped into the well to establish circulation, whenever possible. The amount of cement calculated to fill the production casing and its annulus shall, whenever possible, be pumped down that casing. After a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours, the top of the cement in the casing shall be verified by tagging or pressure testing.

3. Other plugs consisting of cement, concrete or grout shall be set if deemed necessary by the Supervisor.

(3) When the base of fresh water is penetrated, a cement, concrete, or grout plug at least two hundred (200) feet in length shall be placed at least fifty (50) feet below and shall extend to at least one hundred fifty (150) feet above the base of fresh water. A cement, concrete, or grout plug may be required in the casing-borehole annulus if fresh water is not adequately protected by casing and cement, concrete, or grout.

(4) A cement, concrete, or grout plug at least twenty-five (25) feet in length shall be placed inside the smallest string of casing and in all annular spaces near the surface of the ground in each hole plugged, and casing(s) cut in such a manner so as not to interfere with soil cultivation, and a

steel plate at least one-quarter (1/4) inch in thickness shall be welded to the casing stub(s).

(5) The Supervisor may require verification of plugs by tagging and pressure testing.

(6) The interval between plugs shall be filled with an approved fluid.

(7) Other plugging methods and procedures may be required by the Supervisor.

(8) Restoration of location shall be done in accordance with Rule 400-3-4-.16.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History: New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

#### **400-3-4-.15      Report Of Well Plugging.**

Within thirty (30) days after the plugging of any well, an operator shall file Form OGB-11, Report of Well Plugging, with the Supervisor setting forth in detail the method used in plugging such well. A schematic showing the down-hole construction of the well, including the depths and lengths of plugs, shall accompany Form OGB-11.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History: New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

#### **400-3-4-.16      Restoration Of Location.**

When a location is abandoned, all material, debris and equipment, such as drill pipe, casing, tubing, treaters, separators, tanks, and other production, injection, and above-ground pipeline equipment and materials shall be removed from the location. Adequate measures shall be taken to stabilize the location and silt fences or other erosion preventative measures shall be used to minimize erosion, unless otherwise approved by the Supervisor. In any event, the location shall be restored within ninety (90) days in a manner approved by the Supervisor. All water supply wells drilled in connection with the operation shall be properly plugged and abandoned unless future utilization of such well is desired by the landowner, in which case the operator must obtain written consent from the landowner to leave the well open. A copy of such request must be filed with the Supervisor.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History: New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

**400-3-4-.17      Request To Classify Wells As Temporarily Abandoned Or Shut-In.**

(1) **Temporary Abandonment Status.** An operator may request that a well be placed in a temporarily abandoned status by submitting a written statement to the Supervisor describing its future utility. A well may be classified as a temporarily abandoned well upon a showing that the well has future utility. Upon approval of a request by the Supervisor, the well will be placed in a temporarily abandoned status for a period of not more than one (1) year. The operator must submit a subsequent request to the Supervisor prior to the end of such period in order to extend the temporarily abandoned status for an additional period of time of not more than one (1) year. Such request for an extension must be justified in writing and include a statement when the well is scheduled to be utilized. Upon approval of the request by the Supervisor, the temporarily abandoned status will be extended for a period of not more than one (1) year. Thereafter, the Board may, after notice and hearing, extend further the temporarily abandoned status for a well. The Supervisor or Board may require the operator to temporarily or partially plug the well, to verify the mechanical integrity of the casing in the well, and to implement a monitoring program before approving a request to classify a well as temporarily abandoned. The well location shall be maintained in accordance with Rule 400-3-4-.01, relating to Identification of Wells, and Rule 400-3-6-.08, relating to Site Maintenance. Additional safeguards and requirements may be imposed on the operator by the Supervisor or Board.

(2) **Shut-in Status.** An operator may request that a well be placed in a shut-in status by submitting a written statement to the Supervisor stating that the well is capable of producing hydrocarbons but must remain shut in until connected to a gathering system, pipeline or processing facility, or for some other reason. A request to classify a well as shut-in will not be considered until the official test results have been received by the Board on Form OGB-9, First Production or Retest Report. Such request must be submitted in writing to the Supervisor stating why the well is shut in and the date that production is expected to commence. Upon approval by the Supervisor, the well will be placed in a shut-in status for a period of not more than one (1) year. The operator must submit a subsequent request to the Supervisor prior to the end of such period in order to extend the shut-in status for an additional period of time of not more than one (1) year. Such request for an extension must describe the progress that has been made toward placing the well on production and when production is expected to commence. Upon approval of the request by the Supervisor, the shut-in status will be extended for a period of not more than one (1) year. Thereafter, the Board may, after notice and hearing, extend further the shut-in status for a

well. The Supervisor or Board may require the operator to temporarily or partially plug the well, to verify the mechanical integrity of the casing in the well, and to implement a monitoring system before approving a request to classify a well as shut-in. The well location shall be maintained in accordance with Rule 400-3-4-.01, relating to Identification of Wells, and Rule 400-3-6-.08, relating to Site Maintenance. Additional safeguards and requirements may be imposed on the operator by the Supervisor or Board.

**Author:** Kirk McQuillan

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History:** **New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

**Amended:** Filed September 22, 2009; effective October 27, 2009.

#### **400-3-4-.18      Abandoned Wells.**

A well is considered abandoned when it has not been used for six (6) consecutive months, and has not been classified as temporarily abandoned or shut in pursuant to Rule 400-3-4-.17, and cannot be operated, whether because it was drilled as a dry hole or has ceased to produce, or operations have not been conducted thereon, or for some other reason.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History:** **New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

#### **400-3-4-.19      Wells Used For Freshwater.**

When a well to be plugged may safely be used as a freshwater well and such utilization is desired by the surface owner, the well need not be filled above the required sealing plug set below freshwater; provided, the surface owner demonstrates to the Supervisor that the well is being utilized as a freshwater well or agrees to take full responsibility for the well and acquires a two thousand dollar (\$2,000.00) surety bond acceptable to the Board and files such bond with the Board on Form OGB-3. The Supervisor may later release the bond upon proper demonstration that the well is being utilized as a freshwater well.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History:** **New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

#### **400-3-4-.20      Seismic, Core, And Other Exploration Holes To Be Plugged.**

Before any hole is abandoned which is drilled for seismic, core, or other exploratory purposes, it shall be the duty of the owner



or driller of any such hole to plug the same in such manner as to properly protect all freshwater-bearing strata.

**Author:** State Oil and Gas Board

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-17-1, et seq.

**History: New Rule:** Filed April 11, 2000; effective May 16, 2000.

**Ed. Note:** Previous Chapter 4003 (Rules 4003X.01 through 4003X.08) **Repealed and New Chapters** 40031 through 436

**adopted in lieu thereof:** Filed August 7, 1984.

**Ed. Note:** Previous Chapter 400-3-4 (Rules 400-3-4-.01 through 400-3-4-.05) **Repealed and New Chapters** (Rules 400-3-4-.01 through 400-3-4-.20) **adopted in lieu thereof:** Filed April 11, 2000.