

### 317. GENERAL DRILLING RULES

Unless altered, modified, or changed for a particular field or formation upon hearing before the Commission the following shall apply to the drilling or deepening of all wells.

- a. **Blowout prevention equipment (“BOPE”)**. The operator shall take all necessary precautions for keeping a well under control while being drilled or deepened. BOPE, if any, shall be indicated on the Application for Permit to Drill, Deepen, Re-enter, or Recomplete and Operate (Form 2), as well as any known subsurface conditions (e.g. under or over-pressured formations). The working pressure of any BOPE shall exceed the anticipated surface pressure to which it may be subjected, assuming a partially evacuated hole with a pressure gradient of 0.22 psi/ft. [For BOPE requirements in high density areas see Rule 603.b.(4)B. For statewide BOPE specification, inspection, operation and testing requirements see Rule 603.f.]
  - (1) The Director shall have the authority to designate specific areas, fields or formations as requiring certain BOPE. Any such proposed designation shall occur by notice describing the area, field or formation in question and shall be given to all operators of record within such area or field and by publication. The proposed designation, if no protest is timely filed, shall be placed on the Commission consent agenda for its next regularly scheduled meeting following the month in which such notice was given. The matter shall be approved or heard by the Commission in accordance with Rule 520. Such designation shall be effective immediately upon approval by the Commission, except as to any previously-approved Form 2.
  - (2) The Director shall have the authority, outside areas designated pursuant to Rule 317.a.(1), to condition approval of any application for permit to drill by requiring BOPE which the Director determines to be necessary for keeping the well under control. Should the operator object to such condition of approval, the matter shall be heard at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission, subject to the notice requirements of Rule 507.
- b. **Bottom hole location.** Unless authorized by the provisions of Rule 321., all wells shall be so drilled that the horizontal distance between the bottom of the hole and the location at the top of the hole shall be at all times a practical minimum.
- c. **Requirement to post permit at the rig and provide spud notice.** A copy of the approved Application for Permit to Drill, Deepen, Re-enter, or Recomplete and Operate, Form 2, shall be posted in a conspicuous place on the drilling rig or workover rig. A notice shall be provided to the Director on a Sundry Notice, Form 4, no later than five (5) days following the spudding of a well. The Director may apply a condition of approval for Application for Permit to Drill, Deepen, Re-enter, or Recomplete and Operate, Form 2 requiring not less than twenty-four (24) hours nor more than seventy-two (72) hours verbal or written notice prior to spud.
- d. **Casing program to protect hydrocarbon horizons and ground water.** The casing program adopted for each well must be so planned and maintained as to protect any potential oil or gas bearing horizons penetrated during drilling from infiltration of injurious waters from other sources, and to prevent the migration of oil, gas or water from one (1) horizon to another, that may result in the degradation of ground water. A Sundry Notice, Form 4, including a detailed work plan and a wellbore diagram, shall be submitted and approved by the Director prior to any routine or planned casing repair operations. During well operations, prior verbal approval for unforeseen casing repairs followed by the filing of a Sundry Notice, Form 4, after completion of operations shall be acceptable.

- e. **Surface casing where subsurface conditions are unknown.** In areas where pressure and formations are unknown, sufficient surface casing shall be run to reach a depth below all known or reasonably estimated utilizable domestic fresh water levels and to prevent blowouts or uncontrolled flows, and shall be of sufficient size to permit the use of an intermediate string or strings of casings. Surface casing shall be set in or through an impervious formation and shall be cemented by pump and plug or displacement or other approved method with sufficient cement to fill the annulus to the top of the hole, all in accordance with reasonable requirements of the Director. In the D–J Basin Fox Hills Protection Area surface casing will be set in accordance with Rule 317A. (See also subparagraph g.).
- f. **Surface casing where subsurface conditions are known.** For wells drilled in areas where subsurface conditions have been established by drilling experience, surface casing, size at the owner's option, shall be set and cemented to the surface by the pump and plug or displacement or other approved method at a depth and in a manner sufficient to protect all fresh water and to ensure against blowouts or uncontrolled flows. In the D–J Basin Fox Hills Protection Area surface casing shall be set in accordance with Rule 317A. (See also subparagraph g.).
- g. **Alternate aquifer protection by stage cementing.** In areas where fresh water aquifers are of such depth as to make it impractical or uneconomical to set the full amount of surface casing necessary to comply fully with the requirement to cover or isolate all fresh water aquifers as required in subparagraph e. and f., the owner may, at its option, comply with this requirement by stage cementing the intermediate and/or production string so as to accomplish the required result. If unanticipated fresh water aquifers are encountered after setting the surface pipe they shall be protected or isolated by stage cementing the intermediate and/or production string with a solid cement plug extending from fifty (50) feet below each fresh water aquifer to fifty (50) feet above said fresh water aquifer or by other methods approved by the Director in each case. In the D–J Basin Fox Hills Protection Area any stage cementing shall occur only in accordance with Rule 317A. If the stage cement is not circulated to surface, a temperature log or cement bond log shall be run to determine the top of the stage cement to ensure aquifers are protected.
- h. **Surface and intermediate casing cementing.** The operator shall ensure that all surface and intermediate casing cement required under this rule shall be of adequate quality to achieve a minimum compressive strength of three hundred (300) psi after twenty-four (24) hours and eight hundred (800) psi after seventy-two (72) hours measured at ninety-five degrees fahrenheit (95 °F) and at eight hundred (800) psi. All surface casing shall be cemented with a continuous column from the bottom of the casing to the surface. After thorough circulation of the wellbore, cement shall be pumped behind the intermediate casing to at least two hundred (200) feet above the top of the shallowest known production horizon and as required in 317.g. Cement placed behind the surface and intermediate casing shall be allowed to set a minimum of eight (8) hours, or until three hundred (300) psi calculated compressive strength is developed, whichever occurs first, prior to commencing drilling operations. If the surface casing cement level falls below the surface, to the extent safety or aquifer protection is compromised, remedial cementing operations shall be performed.
- i. **Production casing cementing.** The operator shall ensure that all cement required under this rule placed behind production casing shall be of adequate quality to achieve a minimum compressive strength of at least three hundred (300) psi after twenty-four (24) hours and eight hundred (800) psi after seventy-two (72) hours measured at ninety-five degrees fahrenheit (95 °F) and at eight hundred (800) psi. After thorough circulation of a wellbore, cement shall be pumped behind the production casing (200) feet above the top of the shallowest known producing horizon. All fresh water aquifers which are exposed below the surface casing shall be cemented behind the production casing. All such cementing around an aquifer shall consist of a continuous cement column extending from at least fifty (50) feet below the bottom of the fresh water aquifer which is being protected to at least fifty (50) feet above the top of said fresh water aquifer. Cement placed behind the production casing shall be allowed to set seventy-two (72) hours, or until eight

hundred (800) psi calculated compressive strength is developed, whichever occurs first, prior to the undertaking of any completion operation.

- j. **Production casing pressure testing.** The installed production casing shall be adequately pressure tested for the conditions anticipated to be encountered during completion and production operations.
- k. **Protection of aquifers and production stratum and suspension of drilling operations before running production casing.** In the event drilling operations are suspended before production string is run, the Director shall be notified immediately and the operator shall take adequate and proper precautions to assure that no alien water enters oil or gas strata, nor potential fresh water aquifers during such suspension period or periods. If alien water is found to be entering the production stratum or to be causing significant adverse environmental impact to fresh water aquifers during completion testing or after the well has been put on production, the condition shall be promptly remedied.
- l. **Flaring of gas during drilling and notice to local emergency dispatch.** Any gas escaping from the well during drilling operations shall be, so far as practicable, conducted to a safe distance from the well site and burned. The operator shall notify the local emergency dispatch as provided by the local governmental designee of any such flaring. Such notice shall be given prior to the flaring if the flaring can be reasonably anticipated, and in all other cases as soon as possible but in no event more than two (2) hours after the flaring occurs.
- m. **Protection of productive strata during deepening operations.** If a well is deepened for the purpose of producing oil and gas from a lower stratum, such deepening to and completion in the lower stratum shall be conducted in such a manner as to protect all upper productive strata.
- n. **Requirement to evaluate disposal zones for hydrocarbon potential.** If a well is drilled as a disposal well then the disposal zone shall be evaluated for hydrocarbon potential. The proposed hydrocarbon evaluation method shall be submitted in writing and approved by the Director prior to implementation. The productivity results shall be submitted to the Director upon completion of the well.
- o. **Requirement to log well.** For all new drilling operations, the operator shall be required to run a minimum of a resistivity log with gamma-ray or other petrophysical log(s) approved by the Director that adequately describe the stratigraphy of the wellbore. A cement bond log shall be run on all production casing or, in the case of a production liner, the intermediate casing, when these casing strings are run. These logs and all other logs run shall be submitted with the Well Completion or Recompletion Report and Log, Form 5. Open hole logs shall be run at depths that adequately verify the setting depth of surface casing and any aquifer coverage. These requirements shall not apply to the unlogged open hole completion intervals, or to wells in which no open hole logs are run.
- p. **Remedial cementing during recompletion.** The Director may apply a condition of approval for Application for Permit to Drill, Deepen, Re-enter, or Recomplete and Operate, Form 2, to require remedial cementing during recompletion operations consistent with the provisions for protecting aquifers and hydrocarbon bearing zones in this Rule 317.