

UNPLANNED Sidetrack While Drilling: Approval and Reporting Process  
STATEWIDE (except for the San Juan Basin)

*Revised November 6, 2013*

COGCC approval is required prior to drilling any sidetrack of any wellbore (Rules 303a.(1) and 303a.(4)). The operator must obtain verbal approval from an authorized COGCC representative *prior* to plugging back and/or sidetracking, and the operator must submit required forms and data after the sidetrack operations have started.

1. OPERATOR

- a. Contact (by phone & email) COGCC Engineering to request approval to plug back a wellbore and/or drill an unplanned sidetrack
  - i. Eastern Supervisor = Diana Burn 303-918-6320 (diana.burn@state.co.us)
  - ii. Northwestern Supervisor = Dave Andrews 970-456-5262 (david.andrews@state.co.us)
  - iii. Southwestern Engineer = Mark Weems 970-749-0624 (mark.weems@state.co.us)
  - iv. Alternate: If unable to reach the contacts designated above, Stuart Ellsworth 303-489-2977 (stuart.ellsworth@state.co.us)
- b. Provide all of the following information by email to the appropriate COGCC Engineer shown above in Step 1.a.
  - i. Explanation of the situation that has resulted in the need to sidetrack
  - ii. Total measured depth reached in the wellbore being plugged back
  - iii. Casing set – size(s) and measured depth(s)
  - iv. Description of fish in the hole (if any) – including top and bottom measured depths
  - v. Description of proposed plugs: setting measured depths, heights, and cement volumes
  - vi. Type of cement to be used for all plugs, including slurry weight (ppg) and yield (cf/sk)
  - vii. Measured depth of proposed sidetrack kick-off point
  - viii. Proposed objective formation(s) for sidetrack hole – new or same as the wellbore being abandoned
  - ix. BHL target for sidetrack hole – new or same as the wellbore being abandoned (NOTE: a change in the BHL must be reviewed and approved by COGCC Permitting prior to completing the sidetrack. Drilling a sidetrack to an unapproved BHL could result in an NOAV, plugging the well, or both).

2. COGCC Engineering

- a. Evaluate proposed plug back procedure, and discuss with operator if necessary
- b. Provide verbal approval (by phone & email) to the operator for the plug back procedure and unplanned sidetrack
  - i. Send email to operator and to COGCC area engineer, permit supervisor, area permit tech, field inspection supervisor, and area field inspector
  - ii. ALWAYS attach PDF of most recent version of this Statewide Unplanned Sidetrack While Drilling: Approval and Reporting Process document to the email
  - iii. Identify new objective formation(s) and/or new BHL for sidetrack wellbore as necessary
  - iv. If sidetrack BHL differs from BHL for the wellbore being abandoned, then include a statement in the email that indicates: “Verbal approval to proceed is contingent upon the assumption that the BHL and wellbore path remain at a legal location for completion (COGCC permitting staff will evaluate prior to formal approval of the forthcoming Application for Permit to Drill a Sidetrack Wellbore, Form 2). If the BHL or the productive portion of the sidetrack wellbore extends into locations that are not legal, then [INSERT OPERATOR NAME] may have to plug back portion(s) of the well that are not legal or obtain waivers from offset mineral interests.”

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- c. Add a RemindmE for the well, indicating “[ENGINEER NAME] provided verbal approval for a request to sidetrack on [XX/XX/XXXX]. See scanned email correspondence for details.” Insert appropriate date in the bracketed item. The RemindmE should be entered the same day as the approval or as soon as possible thereafter.
3. **OPERATOR**
  - a. Proceed with plugback and sidetrack following receipt of verbal approval from COGCC Engineering
  - b. Submit required forms and data (see details below) to the COGCC area permit tech in Denver for the sidetrack operations as follows:
    - i. Within 24 hours (or end of next business day) submit Application for Permit to Drill a Sidetrack Wellbore, Form 2 to COGCC for formal approval of the Sidetrack Wellbore: Submit the Form 2 electronically via eForm, and immediately notify COGCC area permit tech by sending an email with the eForm Document Number, OR send a scanned copy of the signed Form 2 via email directly to COGCC area permit tech (do not submit hard copy)
    - ii. Within 30 days, submit Drilling Completion Report, Form 5 for the wellbore being abandoned to report operations associated with the drilling and the plug back or abandonment of that wellbore
4. **COGCC Permitting - Upon receipt of the email described in Step 2.b.i. from COGCC engineering:**
  - a. Contact operator to confirm operator’s plans for 24-hour submittal of Form 2 and 30-day submittal of Form 5
  - b. Expedite data entry of Form 2 if paper form submitted
  - c. Pass completeness on Form 2
  - d. Set due dates to today and waive tasks for LGD and Public Comment eForm tasks on Form 2
  - e. Send email to COGCC engineering after passing eForm task on Form 2, and coordinate processing of Form 2 with COGCC engineering
  - f. Expedite approval of Form 2 by the Director

**DETAILED OPERATOR INSTRUCTIONS for REQUIRED FORMS**

Application for Permit to Drill a Sidetrack Wellbore, Form 2: for COGCC approval of the UNPLANNED sidetrack wellbore

1. Submit within 24 hours (or end of next business day) to COGCC in Denver: Submit the Form 2 electronically via eForm, and immediately notify COGCC area permit tech by sending an email with the eForm Document Number, OR send a scanned copy of the signed Form 2 via email directly to COGCC area permit tech (do not submit hard copy)
2. Check Sidetrack box and enter “UNPLANNED SIDETRACK” on “Other:” line at top of Form 2
3. Complete all information, using actual values where applicable (e.g., surface casing information)
4. **REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS:**
  - a. Wellbore diagram including all casing & plugs & KOP for sidetrack wellbore
  - b. Revised Well Location Plat if new BHL target (hand revision of previous plat is acceptable)
  - c. Revised Deviated Drilling Plan if new BHL target
  - d. Convert engineer’s verbal approval email to a PDF and attach to the Form 2 as “CORRESPONDENCE”

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**5. REQUIRED OPERATOR COMMENTS:**

- a. Description of the situation that has resulted in an UNPLANNED sidetrack
- b. Total measured depth reached in the wellbore being plugged back
- c. Casing set – size(s) and measured depth(s)
- d. Description of fish in the hole (if any) – including top and bottom measured depths
- e. Description of proposed plugs: setting measured depths, heights, and cement volumes
- f. Type of cement to be used for all plugs, including slurry weight (ppg) and yield (cf/sk)
- g. Measured depth of proposed sidetrack kick-off point
- h. Proposed objective formation(s) for sidetrack hole – new or same as the wellbore being abandoned
- i. BHL Target for sidetrack hole – new or same as the wellbore being abandoned (NOTE: a change in the BHL must be reviewed and approved by COGCC Permitting prior to completing the sidetrack. Drilling a sidetrack to an unapproved BHL could result in an NOAV, plugging the well, or both).
- j. Verbal/email approval to plug back and sidetrack – indicate the name of the COGCC Engineer who granted verbal/email approval, as described in Step 1.b., and the date approval granted.

Drilling Completion Report, Form 5 for Original Wellbore: to report the completion of the drilling and the plug back of the wellbore

1. Submit within 30 days to COGCC in Denver
2. Submit one original paper Form 5 *or* submit Form 5 electronically in eForm
3. **ALL** information is **REQUIRED** and **ALL** casing, casing cement, and total depth information must be the **ACTUAL** data: This wellbore has been drilled, do not submit the Form 5 with the proposed casing and cement information from the Form 2, which may differ from the actual casing and cement information.
4. Provide actual total depth reached and calculate the footages from section lines for the BHL at that TD
5. Enter all actual plug data
  - a. For a paper submittal use Casing, Liner and Cement (Line 20) section of the form
  - b. For an eForm submittal use Stage/Top Out/Remedial Cement section of the form
6. **REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS:**
  - a. Cement job summaries for all plugs
  - b. Wireline job summaries for any wireline-set plugs
  - c. Cement job summaries for all primary casing cement jobs and any remedial casing cement jobs
  - d. Directional survey
  - e. Logs - LAS and PDF/TIFF (State on Form 5 if no logs were run.)
7. **REQUIRED OPERATOR COMMENTS:**
  - a. Brief description of the UNPLANNED sidetrack, including actual KOP for the sidetrack

NOTE: Upon passing the Engineering Task on the Form 5 for the wellbore that was sidetracked, the COGCC Engineer will manually enter a status of AB for that wellbore in Well Update.