VARIANCES FOR RECYCLING STORAGE CONTAINMENTS

- **Alternative Testing Methods**

Request for OCD Approval of Alternative Test Methods to Analyze Concentrations of TPH and Chloride

The prescriptive mandates of the Rule that are the subject of this request are the following subsections of NMAC 19.15.17.13 [emphasis added], 19.15.34.14 and 19.15.29. 12 D

> **19.15.17.13 CLOSURE AND SITE RECLAMATION REQUIREMENTS:**
> **D.(5)** The operator shall collect, at a minimum, a five point composite of the contents of the temporary pit or drying pad/tank associated with a closed-loop system to demonstrate that, after the waste is solidified or stabilized with soil or other non-waste material at a ratio of no more than 3:1 soil or other non-waste material to waste, the concentration of any contaminant in the stabilized waste is not higher than the parameters listed in Table II of 19.15.17.13 NMAC.

The referenced Table II, which is reproduced in part below, notes the Method with asterisk signifying: "*Or other test methods approved by the division".

Table II
Closure Criteria for Burial Trenches and Waste Left in Place in Temporary Pits

Depth below bottom of pit to groundwater less than 10,000 mg/l TDS	Constituent	Method*	Limit**
25-50 feet	Chloride	EPA Method 300.0	20,000 mg/kg
	TPH	EPA SW-846 Method 418.1	100 mg/kg

> **19.15.34.14 CLOSURE AND SITE RECLAMATION REQUIREMENTS FOR RECYCLING CONTAINMENTS:**
> **C.** The operator shall test the soils beneath the containment for contamination with a five-point composite sample which includes stained or wet soils, if any, and that sample shall be analyzed for the constituents listed in Table I below.
> **(1)** If any contaminant concentration is higher than the parameters listed in Table I, the division may require additional delineation upon review of the results and the operator must receive approval before proceeding with closure.

The referenced Table I, which is reproduced in part below, notes the Method with asterisk signifying: "*Or other test methods approved by the division".

Table I
Closure Criteria for Recycling Containments

Depth below bottom of containment to groundwater less than 10,000 mg/l TDS	Constituent	Method*	Limit**
51 feet - 100 feet	Chloride	EPA 300.0	10,000 mg/kg
	TPH (GRO+DRO+MRO)	EPA SW-846 Method 8015M	2,500 mg/kg

After sampling solids of more than 50 drilling pits in the Permian Basin, we have observed and reported to OCD on numerous occasions significant problems with non-petroleum drilling additives (e.g. starch) interfering with the laboratory method 418.1. It is not surprising that in many instances we found no correlation between the laboratory results using 418.1 and the results using Method 8015.

We request approval of Method 8015 (GRO + DRO + MRO) for Method 418.1.

> **19.15.29.12 D. CLOSURE REQUIREMENTS.** The responsible party must take the following action for any major or minor release containing liquids.
> **(1)** The responsible party must test the remediated areas for contamination with representative five-point composite samples from the walls and base, and individual grab samples from any wet or discolored areas. The samples must be analyzed for the constituents listed in Table I of 19.15.29.12 NMAC or constituents from other applicable remediation standards.

The referenced Table I, is reproduced in part below.

Table I
Closure Criteria for Soils Impacted by a Release

Minimum depth below any point within the horizontal boundary of the release to ground water less than 10,000 mg/l TDS	Constituent	Method*	Limit**
≤ 50 feet	Chloride***	EPA 300.0 or SM4500 Cl B	600 mg/kg
	TPH (GRO+DRO+MRO)	EPA SW-846 Method 8015M	100 mg/kg
	BTEX	EPA SW-846 Method 8021B or 8260B	50 mg/kg
	Benzene	EPA SW-846 Method 8021B or 8260B	10 mg/kg

We request approval of EPA 300.0 or SM4500 for the analysis of chloride.

Demonstration that OCD Approval Will Provide Equal or Better Protection of Fresh Water, Public Health and the Environment

The purpose of TPH analyses in the Pit Rule is to measure total petroleum hydrocarbons not all non-polar compounds, such as starch or cellulose that can interfere with Method 418.1. While Method 418.1 may provide some useful data for transportation of crude oil or condensate spills to disposal, the addition of non-polar organic materials in drilling fluids, especially for horizontal wells, renders Method 418.1 highly problematic to determine compliance with the Rule. Using Method 8015 for TPH (GRO+DRO+MRO) provides a better measurement of what we believe the Commission intended operators to measure.

In hearings before the Oil Conservation Commission technical arguments were presented regarding the use of SM4500 in lieu of EPA 300.00 for chloride analysis for Rule 29. The Division and the Commission agreed that these two methods provide equal or better protection of fresh water, public health and the environment.