

Entered October 29, 1958  
A.P.

BEFORE THE OIL CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE MATTER OF THE HEARING  
CALLED BY THE OIL CONSERVATION  
COMMISSION OF NEW MEXICO FOR  
THE PURPOSE OF CONSIDERING:

CASE NO. 1053  
Order No. R-1224-A

APPLICATION OF THE OIL CONSERVATION  
COMMISSION UPON ITS OWN MOTION, AT  
THE REQUEST OF THE STATE ENGINEER,  
FOR AN ORDER PRESCRIBING RULES AND  
REGULATIONS TO GOVERN THE DISPOSAL  
OF SALT WATER IN AREAS OF LEA COUNTY,  
NEW MEXICO.

ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

BY THE COMMISSION:

This cause originally came on for hearing at 9 o'clock a.m. on May 16, 1956, at Santa Fe, New Mexico, before the Oil Conservation Commission of New Mexico, hereinafter referred to as the "Commission," and was continued from time to time, and was heard again on June 18, 1958, and again on September 17, 1958.

NOW, on this 25<sup>th</sup> day of October, 1958, the Commission, a quorum being present, having considered the evidence adduced and being fully advised in the premises,

FINDS:

(1) That due public notice having been given as required by law, the Commission has jurisdiction of this cause and the subject matter thereof by virtue of its implied powers and the express powers conferred upon the Commission by sub-section (2) and (7) of Section 65-3-11 of the New Mexico Statutes Annotated (1953).

(2) That the surface disposal of oil field brines in unlined pits in the following-described areas constitutes a hazard to the fresh waters in the Lea County Underground Water Basin, as the same is defined by the State Engineer of the State of New Mexico, and that such method of disposal should be prohibited in said areas, to-wit:

Hobbs  
Denton  
Moore

East Caprock  
Bagley  
Saunders

Crossroads  
Bough  
Echol

(3) That only a portion of the Eunice-Monument-Eumont Area (Eunice-Monument, Eumont, Monument-Blaine, and Monument

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Paddock Pools) lies within the boundaries of the said Lea County Underground Water Basin.

(4) That the disposal of oil field brines in unlined pits in that portion of the Eunice-Monument-Eumont Area which lies within the boundaries of the Lea County Underground Water Basin constitutes a hazard to the fresh waters in said basin and that such method of disposal should be prohibited in that portion of said area.

(5) That the testimony presented at the September 17, 1958, hearing of this case has raised a question as to whether the disposal of oil field brines in unlined pits in any area of Lea County other than those areas referred to in Findings No. 2 and 4 above constitutes a hazard to the fresh water supplies of Lea County.

(6) That paragraph (3) of Order No. R-1224 should, therefore, be rescinded.

(7) That a detailed localized study should be made of each area in Lea County, not included in Findings No. 2 and 4, where substantial quantities of oil field brines are produced, to determine whether the surface disposal of said brines in unlined pits constitutes a hazard to the fresh water supplies of Lea County. Further, that the Secretary-Director of the Commission should, from time to time, appoint pool committees to make such studies.

(8) That any well which produces one half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) barrel or less of oil field brines per day should be exempt entirely from the provisions of this order, since there is no evidence that the disposal of such insignificant quantities of oil field brines in unlined pits would constitute a hazard to the fresh waters in the area.

(9) That provision should be made to empower the Secretary-Director to grant administrative exceptions to this order in individual cases where it appears that the granting of such exception would cause no danger of contamination, provided the State Engineer's Office has waived objection to the exception.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. That the surface disposal of oil field brines in unlined pits in the following-described areas be and the same is hereby prohibited as of the effective dates shown below:

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Hobbs Area	-	March 15, 1959
Hobbs Pool		
Hobbs Drinkard Pool		
Bowers Pool		
Denton Area	-	December 1, 1958
Denton Pool		
Denton-Wolfcamp Pool		
Moore Area	-	December 1, 1958
Moore-Devonian Pool		
Moore-Pennsylvanian Pool		
Crossroads Area	-	December 1, 1958
Crossroads Pool		
Crossroads-Pennsylvanian Pool		
Crossroads-Slaughter Pool		
East Caprock Area	-	December 1, 1958
East Caprock-Devonian Pool		
Bagley Area	-	December 1, 1958
Bagley-Siluro Devonian Pool		
Bagley-Pennsylvanian Pool		
Saunders Area	-	December 1, 1958
Saunders-Pennsylvanian Pool		
Bough Area	-	December 1, 1958
Bough-Pennsylvanian Pool		
Echol Area	-	December 1, 1958
Echol Pool		
Eunice-Monument-Eumont Area	-	March 1, 1960
Eunice Monument Pool		
Monument-Blinebry Pool		
Monument-Paddock Pool		
Eumont Gas Pool		
Cass Pool		
Weir Pool		

The provisions of this paragraph apply only to that portion of the Eunice-Monument-Eumont Area which lies within the Lea County Underground Water Basin as the same was declared by the State Engineer in his Order No. 3, dated August 21, 1931, and as the same was extended by Order No. 33, dated October 1, 1952.

PROVIDED HOWEVER; that any well which produces one half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) barrel, or less, of oil field brines per day shall be entirely exempt from the provisions of this order.

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2. The Secretary-Director of the Commission shall have authority to extend the effective dates set forth in paragraph 1. above without notice and hearing where good cause is shown.

3. That nothing contained in this order shall be construed as prohibiting the disposal of oil field brines in impervious lined pits, provided said pits are inspected and approved by a representative of the Commission prior to being used.

4. That the Secretary-Director of the Commission shall have authority to grant exceptions without notice and hearing, to paragraph (1) above where, in his opinion, the granting of such exception would not create a hazard to any fresh water supply, provided the State Engineer has waived objection to the proposed exception.

5. That the Secretary-Director of the Commission shall appoint a committee for each area in Lea County, New Mexico, where substantial quantities of oil field brines are produced, which committees shall make studies as to whether the disposal of oil field brines in unlined pits constitutes a hazard to any fresh water source in said areas. The State Engineer shall be a member of each of said committees.

Such committees will not be required to submit formal reports of their findings to the Commission. If, however, a committee or any member thereof is of the opinion that the surface disposal of oil field brines in unlined pits constitutes a hazard to any fresh water supply, the Commission shall be so notified and the matter shall be set for hearing.

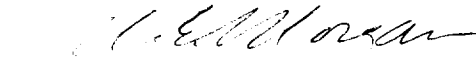
6. That paragraph (3) of Order No. R-1224 be and the same is hereby rescinded.

DONE at Santa Fe, New Mexico, on the day and year herein-above designated.

STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
OIL CONSERVATION COMMISSION



EDWIN L. MECHEM, Chairman



MURRAY E. MORGAN, Member



A. L. PORTER, Jr., Member & Secretary

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