

*Entered December 9, 1966
A.H.O.*

BEFORE THE OIL CONSERVATION COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE MATTER OF THE HEARING CALLED BY
THE OIL CONSERVATION COMMISSION ON ITS
OWN MOTION TO PERMIT ALL OPERATORS IN
THE VACUUM FIELD, LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO,
TO SHOW CAUSE WHY THE DISPOSAL OF PRO-
DUCED SALT WATER IN UNLINED PITS SHOULD
BE PERMITTED IN THE VACUUM FIELD.

CASE No. 3500
Order No. R-3164

ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

BY THE COMMISSION:

This cause came on for hearing at 9 a.m. on December 7, 1966,
at Santa Fe, New Mexico, before Examiner Elvis A. Utz.

NOW, on this 9th day of December, 1966, the Commission, a
quorum being present, having considered the testimony, the record,
and the recommendations of the Examiner, 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.

(2) That the following areas of the Vacuum Field, Lea County,
New Mexico, include the Vacuum (Grayburg-San Andres), Vacuum-Abo
Reef, North-Abo Vacuum, Vacuum-Blaine, Vacuum-Devonian, Vacuum-
Drinkard, Mid Vacuum-Devonian, Vacuum-Glorieta, North Vacuum-
Morrow, Vacuum-Queen, Vacuum-Lower Pennsylvanian, Vacuum-Upper
Pennsylvanian, Vacuum-Wolfcamp, East Vacuum-Wolfcamp, and Vacuum-
Yates Pools and are within the area designated as the Lea County
Underground Water Basin by the State Engineer of New Mexico:

AREA A

LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO
TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 33 EAST, NMPM
Section 36: All

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TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 34 EAST, NMPM
Sections 31 through 36: All

TOWNSHIP 18 SOUTH, RANGE 34 EAST, NMPM
Sections 1 through 5: All
Section 10: E/2
Sections 11 and 12: All

TOWNSHIP 18 SOUTH, RANGE 35 EAST, NMPM
Section 1: N/2
Section 2: N/2
Sections 3 through 8: All
Section 17: N/2

TOWNSHIP 18 SOUTH, RANGE 36 EAST, NMPM
Section 6: N/2

AREA B

LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 33 EAST, NMPM
Section 25: All
Section 26: E/2

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 34 EAST, NMPM
Sections 1 through 30: All

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 35 EAST, NMPM
Section 7: All
Sections 18 through 36: All

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 36 EAST, NMPM
Section 19: W/2
Section 36: S/2

(3) That the surface disposal of produced salt water in unlined pits in the above-described areas and pools or within one mile thereof constitutes a hazard to the fresh waters in the Lea County Underground Water Basin and should be prohibited.

(4) That the operators in the Vacuum Field were apprised of the problem of salt water disposal in unlined pits in the subject area at a meeting called by the Oil Conservation Commission at its Hobbs offices on or about April 26, 1966.

(5) That since that date, certain efforts have been made by some of the operators in the Vacuum Field to eliminate the disposal

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of produced brines in unlined pits in the subject area, including the institution of underground disposal by individual operators, the injection of brines into producing formations for secondary recovery purposes, and the design of a community salt water disposal system by Rice Engineering & Operating, Inc.

(6) That on or about November 9, 1966, the Articles of Agreement for the Vacuum Salt Water Disposal System were sent by Rice Engineering & Operating, Inc., to those operators in the Vacuum Field who have tentatively committed their wells to said system.

(7) That the testimony at the hearing indicates that within 90 days after the execution of the Articles of Agreement by the operators representing 80 percent of the committed wells, the proposed salt water disposal system can be completed and in operation.

(8) That the testimony indicates that the disposal of produced brines in unlined pits in Area A as described in Finding No. 1 constitutes a more immediate threat to the quality of the underlying fresh water supplies.

(9) That the testimony further indicates that the salt water disposal system for Area A can be completed in a shorter period of time than can the remainder of the system.

(10) That the disposal of produced brines in unlined pits in Area A as described in Finding No. 1 should be prohibited after 7:00 o'clock a.m. March 1, 1967.

(11) That the disposal of produced brines in unlined pits in Area B as described in Finding No. 1 should be prohibited after 7:00 o'clock a.m. May 1, 1967.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

(1) That effective 7:00 o'clock a.m., March 1, 1967, the surface disposal of salt water in unlined pits in the following described area, Vacuum Field, Lea County, New Mexico, or within one mile thereof, is hereby prohibited:

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AREA A

LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 33 EAST, NMPM

Section 36: All

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 34 EAST, NMPM

Sections 31 through 36: All

TOWNSHIP 18 SOUTH, RANGE 34 EAST, NMPM

Sections 1 through 5: All

Section 10: E/2

Sections 11 and 12: All

TOWNSHIP 18 SOUTH, RANGE 35 EAST, NMPM

Section 1: N/2

Section 2: N/2

Sections 3 through 8: All

Section 17: N/2

TOWNSHIP 18 SOUTH, RANGE 36 EAST, NMPM

Section 6: N/2

(2) That effective 7:00 o'clock a.m., May 1, 1967, the surface disposal of salt water in unlined pits in the following area, Vacuum Field, Lea County, New Mexico, or within one mile thereof, is hereby prohibited:

AREA B

LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 33 EAST, NMPM

Section 25: All

Section 26: E/2

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 34 EAST, NMPM

Sections 1 through 30: All

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 35 EAST, NMPM

Section 7: All

Sections 18 through 36: All

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 36 EAST, NMPM

Section 19: W/2

Section 36: S/2

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(3) That effective 7:00 o'clock a.m., May 1, 1967, and subject to the provisions of Order No. 1 and Order No. 2 of this order, the surface disposal of salt water in unlined pits in the following pools as now defined or as hereafter extended, or within one mile thereof, Lea County, New Mexico, is hereby prohibited:

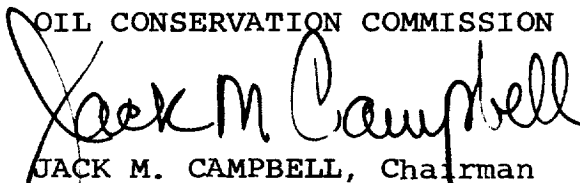
Vacuum (Grayburg-San Andres) Pool
Vacuum-Abo Reef Pool
North-Abo Vacuum Pool
Vacuum-Blinebry Pool
Vacuum-Devonian Pool
Mid Vacuum-Devonian Pool
Vacuum-Drinkard Pool
Vacuum-Glorieta Pool
North Vacuum-Morrow Pool
Vacuum-Queen
Vacuum-Lower Pennsylvanian Pool
Vacuum-Upper Pennsylvanian Pool
Vacuum-Wolfcamp Pool
East Vacuum-Wolfcamp Pool
Vacuum-Yates Pool

(4) That jurisdiction of this cause is retained for the entry of such further orders as the Commission may deem necessary.

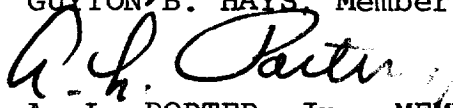
DONE at Santa Fe, New Mexico, on the day and year hereinabove designated.

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

OIL CONSERVATION COMMISSION


JACK M. CAMPBELL, Chairman


GUYTON B. HAYS, Member


A. L. PORTER, Jr., MEMBER & SECRETARY

S E A L

esr/

