

Sante Fe Main Office
Phone: (505) 476-3441

General Information
Phone: (505) 629-6116

Online Phone Directory
<https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/ocd/contact-us>

State of New Mexico
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources
Oil Conservation Division
1220 S. St Francis Dr.
Santa Fe, NM 87505

QUESTIONS

Action 600027

QUESTIONS

Operator: SAHARA OPERATING CO P.O. Box 4130 Midland, TX 79704	OGRID: 20077
	Action Number: 600027
	Action Type: [NOTIFY] Notification Of Release (NOR)

QUESTIONS

Location of Release Source	
<i>Please answer all the questions in this group.</i>	
Site Name	North El Mar 023
Date Release Discovered	12/01/2025
Surface Owner	Federal

Incident Details	
<i>Please answer all the questions in this group.</i>	
Incident Type	Oil Release
Did this release result in a fire or is the result of a fire	No
Did this release result in any injuries	No
Has this release reached or does it have a reasonable probability of reaching a watercourse	No
Has this release endangered or does it have a reasonable probability of endangering public health	No
Has this release substantially damaged or will it substantially damage property or the environment	No
Is this release of a volume that is or may with reasonable probability be detrimental to fresh water	No

Nature and Volume of Release	
<i>Material(s) released, please answer all that apply below. Any calculations or specific justifications for the volumes provided should be attached to the follow-up C-141 submission.</i>	
Crude Oil Released (bbls) Details	Not answered.
Produced Water Released (bbls) Details	Cause: Other Well Produced Water Released: 0 BBL (Unknown Released Amount) Recovered: 0 BBL Lost: 0 BBL.
Is the concentration of chloride in the produced water >10,000 mg/l	Yes
Condensate Released (bbls) Details	Not answered.
Natural Gas Vented (Mcf) Details	Not answered.
Natural Gas Flared (Mcf) Details	Not answered.
Other Released Details	Not answered.
Are there additional details for the questions above (i.e. any answer containing Other, Specify, Unknown, and/or Fire, or any negative lost amounts)	This release was not caused by Sahara Operating Company and its operations. The release was the unintentional result of an increase in borehole pressure, due to an apparent interception of a fracture into the North El Mar 023 well. Before the discovery on April 6, 2026, the 023 was in operation but not leaking. The release of produced water outside the casing coincided with the hydraulic fracture stimulation of a Chevron Salado Draw well, approximately 4,000 feet northeast. As an emergency measure, Sahara shut in the well and excavated an earthen sump to minimize the spread of the produced water over the surface. This containment was monitored daily and fluid removed as needed during the flow of produced water from the inactive well. On April 30, 2026, a bridge plug was set at 4500 feet and the release stopped. Discussions between BLM and Sahara resulted in Sahara misinterpreting that the release was a downhole maintenance/operations issue only and worked to stop the flow. Subsequent discussion with BLM clarified that this issue was a release that requires notification and report to OCD. NM811 has cleared and initial assessment samples will be initiated promptly with 48 hours' notice to OCD. The reported volume will be based on experienced field/visual estimates and disposal records, but we can currently state the total volume may be approximately 88 barrels although significant and consistent recovery occurred and will be subsequently reported. The 023 remains shut in.

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QUESTIONS (continued)

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Nature and Volume of Release (continued)	
Is this a gas only submission (i.e. only significant Mcf values reported)	No, according to supplied volumes this does not appear to be a "gas only" report.
Was this a major release as defined by Subsection A of 19.15.29.7 NMAC	Yes
Reasons why this would be considered a submission for a notification of a major release	From paragraph A. "Major release" determine using: (1) an unauthorized release of a volume, excluding gases, of 25 barrels or more.
With the implementation of the 19.15.27 NMAC (05/25/2021), venting and/or flaring of natural gas (i.e. gas only) are to be submitted on the C-129 form.	

Initial Response

The responsible party must undertake the following actions immediately unless they could create a safety hazard that would result in injury.

The source of the release has been stopped	True
The impacted area has been secured to protect human health and the environment	True
Released materials have been contained via the use of berms or dikes, absorbent pads, or other containment devices	True
All free liquids and recoverable materials have been removed and managed appropriately	True
If all the actions described above have not been undertaken, explain why	Not answered.

Per Paragraph 4 of Subsection B of 19.15.29.8 NMAC the responsible party may commence remediation immediately after discovery of a release. If remediation has begun, please prepare and attach a narrative of actions to date in the follow-up C-141 submission. If remedial efforts have been successfully completed or if the release occurred within a lined containment area (see 19.15.29.11(A)(5)(a) NMAC), please prepare and attach all information needed for closure evaluation in the follow-up C-141 submission.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

☒	I acknowledge that I am authorized to submit notification of a release on behalf of my operator.
☒	I acknowledge that upon submitting this application, I will be creating a new incident file (assigned to my operator) to track the notification(s) and corrective action(s) for a release, pursuant to NMAC 19.15.29.
☒	I acknowledge that creating a new incident file will require my operator to file subsequent submission(s) of form "C-141, Application for administrative approval of a release notification and corrective action", pursuant to NMAC 19.15.29.
☒	I hereby certify that the information given above is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and understand that pursuant to OCD rules and regulations all operators are required to report and/or file certain release notifications and perform corrective actions for releases which may endanger public health or the environment.
☒	I acknowledge the fact that the acceptance of a C-141 report by the OCD does not relieve the operator of liability should their operations have failed to adequately investigate and remediate contamination that pose a threat to groundwater, surface water, human health or the environment.
☒	I acknowledge the fact that, in addition, OCD acceptance of a C-141 report does not relieve the operator of responsibility for compliance with any other federal, state, or local laws and/or regulations.

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CONDITIONS

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CONDITIONS

Created By	Condition	Condition Date
gmcalpine	When submitting future reports regarding this release, please submit the calculations used or specific justification for the volumes reported on the initial C-141.	7/17/2026