



NEW MEXICO ENERGY, MINERALS & NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION
2040 South Pacheco Street
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505
(505) 827-7131

NOTICE

TO: All Oil and Gas Operators, Mineral Interest Owners,
and Interested Parties

FROM: Lori Wrotenbery, Director *LW*

SUBJECT: Implementation of Amended Division Rule 104

DATE: October 25, 1999

Amendments to Division Rule 104 "Well Spacing and Location," adopted by the New Mexico Oil Conservation Commission in Order R-11231 (Case 12119) on August 12, 1999, became effective August 31, 1999. Attached to this notice are copies of Order No. R-11232, with the amended Rule 104 attached, and the recently amended Rule 1207 concerning notice requirements.

Summary of Changes

The amendments made five main changes in Rule 104:

- (1) the rule has been shortened and reorganized;
- (2) well location setbacks for all gas development on 160-acre spacing throughout the State are now standardized at 660 feet from the outer boundary of the quarter section line;
- (3) well location setbacks for deep gas development on 320-acre spacing in Southeast New Mexico have been relaxed from 1650 feet from an end boundary to 660 feet;
- (4) one optional infill well is now allowed within 320-acre deep gas units in Southeast New Mexico; and
- (5) interior 330-foot setbacks from quarter-quarter section lines for both 160-acre and 320-acre gas units governed by Rule 104 have been reduced to 10 feet.

Effect of Changes

Since the primary objectives of the rule changes were to grant operators increased flexibility in locating wells and decrease the number of applications for unorthodox locations, all future location

October 25, 1999

Page 2

exceptions will require substantial justification, *i.e.*, unusual circumstances. Please also note the recent changes made to the notice requirements for unorthodox locations found in Division Rule 1207.A(2).

Furthermore, the well location requirement for oil wells on 40-acre spacing **has not** changed and remains 330 feet from the quarter-quarter section. Operators need to be wary if a well's main objective is a deeper gas-producing interval but there is the possibility of oil production and the location is closer to an interior quarter-quarter section line than 330 feet. In order to complete the well in a shallower oil-producing horizon, the operator will be required to obtain an exception for the unorthodox oil well location. Location exceptions in this situation will not be granted unless unusual circumstances justify the location, and the closer a well is to a neighboring property, the harder it will be to obtain an exception. For example, if the well is only 10 feet off a neighboring property, it is highly unlikely an exception will be granted.

Regarding the new provision authorizing one infill well in a 320-acre deep gas unit in Southeast New Mexico, application can be made to adopt or amend special pool rules to limit the number of wells per spacing unit in any pool where infill wells are not justified. The notice requirements for special pool rules were also recently amended to accommodate this type of action. See Division Rule 1207.A(4).

Unless otherwise provided by special pool rules or amended Rule 104 (*e.g.*, the infill provision for deep gas pools in Southeast New Mexico), only **one** well per spacing unit is permitted in non-prorated pools. The Division Director, however, may grant administrative exceptions in appropriate circumstances.

Effect on Existing Orders

Any existing special pool rule or other order specific to well locations (*e.g.*, a production penalty on an unorthodox well location now standard under amended Rule 104) shall remain in full force and effect until the order is amended. Operators should review these orders to determine whether to file applications to conform the orders to amended Rule 104.

In the near future, a hearing will be held before a Division Hearing Examiner addressing the few deep gas pools in Southeast New Mexico still spaced on 160 acres. At the hearing, the Division will consider whether to issue an order listing these pools and setting forth setback requirements mirroring, if applicable, the setbacks for shallow gas wells in Southeast New Mexico.

Division Memoranda dated July 27, 1988 and August 3, 1990 concerning the interpretation of old Rule 104 are hereby withdrawn.

Attachments

DOCKET: EXAMINER HEARING - THURSDAY - NOVEMBER 4, 1999

8:15 A.M. - 2040 South Pacheco

Santa Fe, New Mexico

Dockets Nos. 34-99 and 35-99 are tentatively set for November 18 and December 2, 1999. Applications for hearing must be filed at least 23 days in advance of hearing date. The following cases will be heard by an Examiner:

CASE 12249: Continued from October 7, 1999, Examiner Hearing.

Application of Navajo Refining Company to modify its discharge plan to change the location of an injection well, Eddy County, New Mexico. Applicant seeks to modify its discharge plan (# UIC-CLI-008) to revise the location of its proposed WDW-2 injection well to a well originally drilled as the Amoco Production Company Diamond Federal Gas Com No. 1, located in the NW/4 of Section 12, Township 18 South, Range 27 East. The well is located approximately 10 miles southeast of Artesia, New Mexico.

CASE 12273: **Application of Pogo Production Company for an Unorthodox Oil Well Location, Lea County, New Mexico.** Applicant seeks approval to drill its proposed Red Tank "33" Federal Well No. 1 at an unorthodox oil well location 10 feet from the North and East lines (Unit A) of Section 33, Township 22 South, Range 32 East, in order to test both the Delaware and Bone Spring formations. The NE/4 NE/4 of Section 33 is to be dedicated to this well in order to form a standard 40-acre oil spacing and proration unit for both the Undesignated West Red Tank-Delaware Pool and the Undesignated Red Tank-Bone Spring Pool. This unit is located approximately 8 miles north-northeast of New Mexico State Road No. 128 at the Lea/West County line.**CASE 12234:** Continued from October 21, 1999, Examiner Hearing.

Application of Louis Dreyfus Natural Gas for Compulsory Pooling and an Unorthodox Oil Well Location, Eddy County, New Mexico. Applicant seeks an order pooling all mineral interests from the surface to the base of the Morrow formation underlying the following described acreage in Section 4, Township 18 South, Range 29 East, in the following manner: (a) the N/2 to form a standard 320-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools developed on 320-acre spacing within this vertical extent which presently includes the Undesignated Grayburg-Strawn Gas Pool, Undesignated Grayburg-Atoka Gas Pool, Undesignated Grayburg-Morrow Gas Pool, and Undesignated South Empire-Morrow Gas Pool; (b) the NE/4 to form a standard 160-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools developed on 160-acre spacing within that vertical extent; (c) the S/2 NE/4 to form a standard 80-acre oil spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools developed on 80-acre spacing which presently includes the Undesignated South Empire-Wolfcamp Pool; and (d) the SW/4 NE/4 to form a standard 40-acre oil spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools developed on 40-acre spacing within this vertical extent which presently includes the Loco Hills-Queen-Grayburg-San Andres Pool, Undesignated Loco Hills-Bone Spring Pool, and Undesignated Loco Hills-Cisco Pool. These four units are to be dedicated to a single well, the proposed Loco Hills 4 Federal Com Well No. 1, to be drilled 1980 feet from the North line and 1650 feet from the East line (Unit G) of Section 4, being a standard well location for the 40, 160, and 320-acre spacing and proration units but an unorthodox oil well location in the Undesignated South Empire-Wolfcamp Pool for the 80-acre unit. Also to be considered will be the cost of drilling and completing the well and the allocation of the cost thereof, as well as actual operating costs and charges for supervision, designation of applicant as the operator of the well, and a charge for risk involved in drilling the well. The proposed well location is approximately 6.5 miles west-southwest of Loco Hills, New Mexico.

CASE 12274: **Application of David H. Arrington Oil and Gas, Inc. for Compulsory Pooling, Directional Drilling and an Unorthodox Well Location, Lea County, New Mexico.** Applicant seeks an order pooling all mineral interests from the surface to the base of the Wolfcamp formation underlying the SE/4 NE/4 for all formations developed on 40-acre spacing, Section 29, Township 15 South, Range 36 East. Applicant proposes to dedicate this pooled unit to its Prince Nymph Well No. 1-A which will be drilled by reentering the Price-Nymph Well No. 1 located 2308 feet from the South line and 943 feet from the East line in Unit I of Section 29 and kicking off and directionally drilling in a northerly direction to an unorthodox bottomhole location within 50 feet of a point 2440 feet from the North line and 866 feet from the East line in Unit H of Section 29 provided, however, the bottomhole location shall not be closer than 200 feet to the southern boundary of the dedicated 40-acre spacing unit. Also to be considered will be the cost of drilling and completing the well and the allocation of the cost thereof, as well as actual operating costs and charges for supervision, designation of applicant as operator of the well, and a charge for risk involved in drilling and completing the well. The unit is located approximately 2 miles northeast of Lovington, New Mexico.**CASE 12275:** **Application of Nearburg Exploration Company, L.L.C. for Compulsory Pooling, Lea County, New Mexico.** Applicant seeks an order pooling all mineral interests in all formations developed on 320-acre spacing in the S/2 including but not limited to the East Gem-Morrow Gas Pool, in all formations developed on 160-acre spacing in the SE/4, in all formations developed on 80-acre spacing in the N/2 SE/4, and in all formations developed on 40-acre spacing in the NW/4 SE/4 of Section 13, Township 19 South, Range 33 East. The units are to be dedicated to its Stetson 13 Federal Com Well No. 1 to be drilled at a standard location 1650 feet from the South and East lines of Section 13 to a depth sufficient to test all formations from the surface to the base of the Morrow formation. Also to be considered will be the cost of drilling and completing the well and the allocation of the cost thereof, as well as actual operating costs and charges for supervision, designation of Nearburg Producing Company as the operator of the well, and a charge for risk involved in drilling and completing the well. These units are located approximately 9 miles northeast of Halfway, New Mexico.

Examiner Hearing – November 4, 1999

Docket No. 33-99

Page 2 of 6

CASE 12246: Continued from October 21, 1999, Examiner Hearing.

Application of Snow Oil & Gas, Inc. for Compulsory Pooling, Eddy County, New Mexico. Applicant seeks an order pooling all mineral interests from the surface to the base of the Bone Spring formation which includes the Esperanza-Delaware Pool, underlying the NW/4 SW/4 for all formations developed on 40-acre spacing in Section 28, Township 21 South, Range 27 East. Applicant proposes to dedicate this pooled unit to a well to be drilled at a standard location (Unit L) in the NW/4 SW/4 of Section 28 to test any and all formations to the base of the Bone Spring formation. Also to be considered will be the cost of drilling and completing the well and the allocation of the cost thereof, as well as actual operating costs and charges for supervision, designation of applicant as the operator of the well, and a charge for risk involved in drilling and completing the well. The unit is located approximately 2 miles northeast of the City of Carlsbad, New Mexico.

CASE 12276: **Application of Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Company for Compulsory Pooling, San Juan County, New Mexico.** Applicant seeks an order pooling all mineral interests in the Mesaverde formation and the Chacra formation underlying the following described acreage within Section 36, Township 27 North, Range 8 West, in the following manner: (i) a 320-acre gas spacing unit consisting of the W/2 of this section for gas production from the Blanco-Mesaverde Gas Pool to be dedicated to the proposed Brookhaven Com Well No. 8 to be located in the NW/4 and to the Brookhaven Com Well No. 8-A to be located in the SW/4 of this section; (ii) for a standard 160-acre gas spacing unit consisting of the NW/4 of this section for gas production from the Otero-Chacra Gas Pool to be dedicated to the Brookhaven Com Well No. 8; and (iii) for a standard 160-acre gas spacing unit consisting of the SW/4 of this section for gas production from the Otero-Chacra Gas Pool to be dedicated to the Brookhaven Com Well No. 8-A. The units are to be dedicated to Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Company's Brookhaven Com Wells No. 8 and 8-A which are to be drilled as dual completions at standard gas well locations within these quarter sections. Also to be considered will be the costs of drilling and completing the wells and the allocation of the costs thereof, as well as actual operating costs and charges for supervision, designation of applicant as the operator of the wells, and a charge for risk involved in drilling and completing the wells. The wells are located approximately 15 miles northeast of the El Huerfano Trading Post on New Mexico State Highway 44.

CASE 12277: **Application of Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Company for Compulsory Pooling, San Juan County, New Mexico.** Applicant seeks an order pooling all mineral interests in the Mesaverde formation within the E/2 of Section 16, Township 31 North, Range 11 West for a 320-acre gas spacing unit consisting of the E/2 of this section for gas production from the Blanco-Mesaverde Gas Pool to be dedicated to the proposed Brookhaven Com B Well No. 3B to be located in the NE/4 SE/4 of Section 16. Also to be considered will be the cost of drilling and completing the well and the allocation of the cost thereof, as well as actual operating costs and charges for supervision, designation of applicant as the operator of the well, and a charge for risk involved in drilling and completing the well. The unit is located approximately 5 miles north of Aztec, New Mexico.

CASE 12229: Readvertised - Continued from October 21, 1999, Examiner Hearing.

Application of OXY USA, Inc. for Compulsory Pooling and an Unorthodox Oil Well Location, Eddy County, New Mexico. Applicant seeks an order pooling all mineral interests from the surface to the base of the Morrow formation, underlying the following described acreage in Section 4, Township 18 South, Range 29 East, in the following manner: (a) the N/2 to form a standard 320-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools developed on 320-acre spacing within this vertical extent which presently includes the Undesignated Grayburg-Strawn Gas Pool, Undesignated Grayburg-Atoka Gas Pool, Undesignated Grayburg-Morrow Gas Pool, and Undesignated South Empire-Morrow Gas Pool; (b) the NW/4 to form a standard 160-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools developed on 160-acre spacing within that vertical extent; (c) the S/2 NW/4 to form a standard 80-acre oil spacing and proration unit for the Undesignated South Empire-Wolfcamp Pool; and (d) the SE/4 NW/4 to form a standard 40-acre oil spacing and proration unit for any and all formations and/or pools developed on 40-acre spacing within this vertical extent which presently includes the Loco Hills-Queen-Grayburg-San Andres Pool, Undesignated Loco Hills-Bone Spring Pool, and Undesignated Loco Hills-Cisco Pool. These four units are to be dedicated to a single well, the proposed Buckskin Federal Well No. 1, to be drilled 1980 feet from the North line and 1650 feet from the East line (Unit G) of Section 4 which is a standard well location for the 40, 160, and 320-acre spacing and proration units but an unorthodox oil well location in the Undesignated South Empire-Wolfcamp Pool for the 80-acre unit. Also to be considered will be the cost of drilling and completing the well and the allocation of the cost thereof, as well as actual operating costs and charges for supervision, designation of applicant as the operator of the well, and a charge for risk involved in drilling the well. The proposed well location is approximately 6.5 miles west-southwest of Loco Hills, New Mexico.

CASE 12278: **Application of Pride Energy Company for Division rescission of approval of a change of operator, Lea County, New Mexico.** Applicant seeks a Division order rescinding its October 5, 1999 approval of a request by EGL Resources Inc. for a change of operator (Division form C-104) from Pride Energy Company to EGL Resources, Inc. for the Arco State Well No. 1 located in Unit P, Section 16, Township 18 South, Range 35 East, Lea County, New Mexico. This well is located approximately 19 miles west of Hobbs, New Mexico.

Examiner Hearing – November 4, 1999

Docket No. 33-99

Page 3 of 6

CASE 12235: Continued from October 21, 1999, Examiner Hearing.

Application of Louis Dreyfus Natural Gas Corp. for Compulsory Pooling, Eddy County, New Mexico. Applicant seeks an order pooling all mineral interests from the surface to the base of the Morrow formation, underlying the following described acreage in Section 2, Township 19 South, Range 28 East, in the following manner: the W/2 to form a standard 320-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any formations and/or pools developed on 320-acre spacing within that vertical extent, including the Undesignated Millman-Wolfcamp Gas Pool, Undesignated North Turkey Track-Cisco Gas Pool, Undesignated Millman-Atoka Gas Pool, and Undesignated North Turkey Track-Morrow Gas Pool; the SW/4 to form a standard 160-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any formations and/or pools developed on 160-acre spacing within that vertical extent; the N/2 SW/4 to form a standard 80-acre oil spacing and proration unit for any formations and/or pools developed on 80-acre spacing within that vertical extent, including the Undesignated Travis-Upper Pennsylvanian Pool; and the NE/4 SW/4 to form a standard 40-acre oil spacing and proration unit for any formations and/or pools developed on 40-acre spacing within that vertical extent, including the Undesignated Artesia Queen-Grayburg-San Andres Pool and Undesignated Palmillo-Bone Spring Pool. The units are to be dedicated to its Turkey Track "2" State Well No. 1 located at an orthodox location 1650 feet from the North and West lines (Unit K) of Section 2. Also to be considered will be the cost of drilling and completing the well and the allocation of the cost thereof, as well as actual operating costs and charges for supervision, designation of applicant as the operator of the well, and a charge for risk involved in drilling the well. The units are located approximately 13 1/2 miles northeast of Lakewood, New Mexico.

CASE 12244: Continued from October 21 1999, Examiner Hearing.

Application of Nearburg Exploration Company, L.L.C. for Compulsory Pooling, Eddy County, New Mexico. Applicant seeks an order pooling all mineral interests from the surface to the base of the Morrow formation underlying the following described acreage in Section 7, Township 22 South, Range 26 East, in the following manner: the E/2 to form a standard 320-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any formations and/or pools developed on 320-acre spacing within that vertical extent, including the Undesignated Hackberry Hills-Canyon Gas Pool, Undesignated Happy Valley-Strawn Gas Pool, Undesignated Hackberry Hills-Atoka Gas Pool, and Happy Valley-Morrow Gas Pool; the SE/4 to form a standard 160-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any formations and/or pools developed on 160-acre spacing within that vertical extent; and the NE/4 SE/4 to form a standard 40-acre oil spacing and proration unit for any formations and/or pools developed on 40-acre spacing within that vertical extent, including the Undesignated Filaree Dome-Delaware Pool and Undesignated Happy Valley-Bone Spring Pool. The units are to be dedicated to its White Tip "7" Fed. Well No. 1 to be located 1550 feet from the South line and 990 feet from the East line (Unit I) of Section 7. Also to be considered will be the cost of drilling and completing the well and the allocation of the cost thereof, as well as actual operating costs and charges for supervision, designation of Nearburg Producing Company as the operator of the well, and a charge for risk involved in drilling and completing the well. The unit is located approximately 6 miles west-southeast of Carlsbad, New Mexico.

CASE 12264: Continued from October 21, 1999, Examiner Hearing.

Application of Maralo, LLC for an Amendment of Commingling Order CTB-480 to Allow for an Alternate Method of Gas Measurement, Lea County, New Mexico. Applicant seeks an amendment to Commingling Order CTB-480 and an exception to Division Rules 309-A and 309-B to allocate production based on annual GOR well testing for the following federal leases in the West Corbin-Delaware Pool: Corbin "13" Federal, West Corbin "13" Federal and the Uncle Sam "13" Federal, covering the NE/4 SE/4, S/2 SE/4 and SE/4 NE/4, respectively, of Section 13, Township 18 South, Range 32 East. These leases are located approximately 10 miles southeast of Maljamar, New Mexico.

CASE 12237: Continued from October 21, 1999 Examiner Hearing.

Application of Mewbourne Oil Company for Compulsory Pooling, Eddy County, New Mexico. Applicant seeks an order pooling all mineral interests from the base of the Bone Spring formation to the base of the Morrow formation underlying the W/2 of Section 8, Township 18 South, Range 31 East, to form a standard 320-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any formations and/or pools developed on 320-acre spacing within this vertical extent, including the Undesignated North Shugart-Atoka Gas Pool and Undesignated North Shugart-Morrow Gas Pool. The unit is to be dedicated to its Fren "8" Fed. Com. Well No. 1, located at an orthodox gas well location in the NW/4 of Section 8. Also to be considered will be the cost of drilling and completing the well and the allocation of the cost thereof, as well as actual operating costs and charges for supervision, designation of applicant as the operator of the well, and a charge for risk involved in drilling and completing the well. The unit is located approximately 6 1/2 miles southeast of Loco Hills, New Mexico.

CASE 12261: Continued from October 21, 1999, Examiner Hearing.

Application of KCS Medallion Resources, Inc. for Compulsory Pooling, Eddy County, New Mexico. Applicant seeks an order pooling all mineral interests from the the base of the Bone Spring formation to the base of the Morrow formation underlying the E/2 of Section 28, Township 21 South, Range 27 East, to form a standard 320-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any formations and/or pools developed on 320-acre spacing within that vertical extent, including the Undesignated East Carlsbad-Wolfcamp Gas Pool, Undesignated Burton Flat-Strawn Gas Pool, Undesignated Southeast La Huerta-Atoka Gas Pool, and Burton Flat-Morrow Gas Pool. The unit is to be dedicated to its Esperanza "28" Well No. 1, to be drilled at a location 860 feet from the South line and 1204 feet from the East line (Unit P) of Section 7. Also to be considered will be the cost of drilling and completing the well and the allocation of the cost thereof, as well as actual operating costs and charges for supervision, designation of applicant as the operator of the well, and a charge for risk involved in drilling and completing the well. The unit is located approximately 3 1/2 miles northeast of Carlsbad, New Mexico.

Examiner Hearing – November 4, 1999

Docket No. 33-99

Page 4 of 6

CASE 12279: **This case will be continued to November 18, 1999, Examiner Hearing.**

Application of Oil Conservation Division for an order requiring Merit Energy Company to plug three (3) wells in Eddy County, New Mexico. In the matter of the hearing called by the Oil Conservation Division to permit the operator, Merit Energy Company and all other interested parties to appear and show cause why three (3) wells located in Section 1, Township 21 South, Range 27 East, Eddy County, New Mexico (the Burton Flat Wells No. 1, 2 and 3 located in Units J, O and P, respectively), should not be plugged and abandoned in accordance with a Division-approved plugging program. Further, should the operator fail to properly plug these wells, the Division seeks an order (i) requiring operator to properly plug these wells; (ii) authorizing the Division to plug these wells; (iii) ordering a forfeiture of the plugging bond, and (iv) assessing fines for failure to comply with the order. These wells are located approximately 12 miles southeast of Lakewood, New Mexico.

CASE 12280: **This case will be continued to November 18, 1999, Examiner Hearing.**

Application of Oil Conservation Division for an order requiring Rault Petroleum Corporation to plug four (4) wells in Lincoln, De Baca and Chaves Counties, New Mexico. In the matter of the hearing called by the Oil Conservation Division to permit the operator, Rault Petroleum Corporation and all other interested parties to appear and show cause why the following four (4) wells located in (i) Unit J, Section 2, Township 3, South, Range 19 East, Lincoln County (the Armstrong State Well No. 1), (ii) Unit M, Section 33, Township 3 South, Range 25 East, De Baca County (the Mark W. Isler Well No. 1), (iii) Unit G, Section 24, Township 1 North, Range 20 East, De Baca County (the Ridge State Well No. 1), and (iv) Unit F, Section 24, Township 8 South, Range 27 East, Chaves County, (the Union State Well No. 1), should not be plugged and abandoned in accordance with a Division-approved plugging program. Further, should the operator fail to properly plug these wells, the Division seeks an order (i) requiring operator to properly plug these wells; (ii) authorizing the Division to plug these wells; (iii) ordering a forfeiture of the plugging bond, and (iv) assessing fines for failure to comply with the order.

CASE 12256: **Continued from October 21, 1999, Examiner Hearing.**

Application of E.G.L. Resources, Inc. for Compulsory Pooling, Eddy County, New Mexico. Applicant seeks an order pooling all mineral interests from the surface to the base of the Yates formation underlying the NW/4 of Section 27, Township 20 South, Range 28 East, to form a standard 160-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any formations and/or pools developed on 160-acre spacing within that vertical extent, including the Undesignated South Burton-Yates Gas Pool. This unit is to be dedicated to a well to be drilled at a standard gas well location thereon. Also to be considered will be the cost of drilling and completing the well and the allocation of the cost thereof, as well as actual operating costs and charges for supervision, designation of applicant as the operator of the well, and a charge for risk involved in drilling and completing the well. The unit is located approximately 9.5 miles north-northeast of Carlsbad, New Mexico.

CASE 12257: **Continued from October 21, 1999, Examiner Hearing.**

Application of E.G.L. Resources, Inc. for Compulsory Pooling, Eddy County, New Mexico. Applicant seeks an order pooling all mineral interests from the surface to the base of the Yates formation underlying the NW/4 of Section 23, Township 20 South, Range 28 East to form a standard 160-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any formations and/or pools developed on 160-acre spacing within that vertical extent, including the Russell-Lower Yates Gas Pool. This unit is to be dedicated to a well to be drilled at a standard gas well location thereon. Also to be considered will be the cost of drilling and completing the well and the allocation of the cost thereof, as well as actual operating costs and charges for supervision, designation of applicant as the operator of the well, and a charge for risk involved in drilling and completing the well. The unit is located approximately 11 miles north-northeast of Carlsbad, New Mexico.

CASE 12268: **Continued from October 21, 1999, Examiner Hearing.**

Application of E. G. L. Resources, Inc. for Compulsory Pooling, Eddy County, New Mexico. Applicant seeks an order pooling all mineral interests from the surface to the base of the Morrow formation underlying the W/2 of Section 4, Township 20 South, Range 27 East, to form a standard 320-acre gas spacing and proration unit for any formations and/or pools developed on 160-acre spacing within that vertical extent. The unit is to be dedicated to its Trigg Federal Well No. 1, to be drilled at an orthodox location in the W/2 of Section 4. Also to be considered will be the cost of drilling and completing the well and the allocation of the cost thereof, as well as actual operating costs and charges for supervision, designation of applicant as the operator of the well, and a charge for risk involved in drilling and completing the well. The unit is located approximately 5 miles east-southeast of Lakewood, New Mexico.

CASE 12281: In the matter of the hearing called by the Oil Conservation Division for an order creating and extending certain pools in Eddy County, New Mexico.

- (a) CREATE a new pool in Eddy County, New Mexico, classified as a gas pool for Wolfcamp production and designated as the Chalk Bluff-Wolfcamp Gas Pool. The discovery well is the Yates Petroleum Corporation Pierre "AGF" State Com. Well No. 1 located in Unit A of Section 26. Township 18 South, Range 27 East, NMPM. Said pool would comprise:

TOWNSHIP 18 SOUTH, RANGE 27 EAST, NMPM

Section 26: N/2

- (b) CREATE a new pool in Eddy County, New Mexico, classified as a gas pool for Cisco production and designated as the Illinois Camp-Cisco Gas Pool. The discovery well is the Louis Dreyfus Natural Gas Corporation Fireweed "10" Federal Well No. 1 located in Unit H of Section 10. Township 18 South, Range 28 East, NMPM. Said well would comprise:

TOWNSHIP 18 SOUTH, RANGE 28 EAST, NMPM

Section 10: N/2

- (c) EXTEND the East Carlsbad-Bone Spring Pool in Eddy County, New Mexico, to include:

TOWNSHIP 21 SOUTH, RANGE 27 EAST, NMPM

Section 14: E/2

- (d) EXTEND the Cedar Lake-Cisco Pool in Eddy County, New Mexico, to include:

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 30 EAST, NMPM

Section 25: S/2

- (e) EXTEND the Southeast Crow Flats-Morrow Gas Pool in Eddy County, New Mexico, to include:

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 28 EAST, NMPM

Section 8: N/2

- (f) EXTEND the East Empire-Yeso Pool in Eddy County, New Mexico, to include:

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 29 EAST, NMPM

Section 20: SE.4

- (g) EXTEND the Frontier Hills-Strawn Gas Pool in Eddy County, New Mexico, to include:

TOWNSHIP 23 SOUTH, RANGE 26 EAST, NMPM

Section 15: S/2

- (h) EXTEND the Loco Hills-Paddock Pool in Eddy County, New Mexico, to include:

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 30 EAST, NMPM

Section 15: SE/4

Section 16: SW/4

- (i) EXTEND the Logan Draw-Morrow Gas Pool in Eddy County, New Mexico, to include:

TOWNSHIP 17 SOUTH, RANGE 27 EAST, NMPM

Section 23: N/2

Section 24: N/2

- (j) EXTEND the Malaga-Delaware Pool in Eddy County, New Mexico, to include:

TOWNSHIP 24 SOUTH, RANGE 29 EAST, NMPM

Section 5: SW/4

- (k) EXTEND the Russell-Lower Yates Gas Pool in Eddy County, New Mexico, to include:

TOWNSHIP 20 SOUTH, RANGE 28 EAST, NMPM

Section 22: E/2

Examiner Hearing – November 4, 1999
Docket No. 33-99
Page 6 of 6

(l) EXTEND the North Shugart-Bone Spring Pool in Eddy County, New Mexico, to include:

TOWNSHIP 18 SOUTH, RANGE 31 EAST, NMPM

Section 9: SW/4

Section 18: SW/4

Section 19: W/2

(m) EXTEND the North Turkey Track-Morrow Gas Pool in Eddy County, New Mexico, to include:

TOWNSHIP 18 SOUTH, RANGE 29 EAST, NMPM

Section 22: N/2

IN THE ABSENCE OF OBJECTION, THIS CASE WILL BE TAKEN UNDER ADVISEMENT

1207 NOTICE REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIFIC ADJUDICATIONS [1-1-86...2-1-96; A, 7-15-99]

1207.A. Applicants for the following adjudicatory hearings before the Division or Commission shall give notice in addition to that required by Rule 1204 as set forth below: [1-1-86...2-1-96; A, 7-15-99]

(1) Compulsory Pooling and Statutory Unitization: [1-1-86...2-1-96; A, 7-15-99]

(a) Notice shall be given to any owner of an interest in the mineral estate whose interest is evidenced by a written document of conveyance either of record or known to the applicant at the time of filing the application and whose interest has not been voluntarily committed to the area proposed to be pooled or unitized (other than a royalty interest subject to a pooling or unitization clause). [Rn, 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(1), 7-15-99, A, 7-15-99]

(b) When an applicant is unable to locate all the owners of interests to be pooled and the application is unopposed by those located, the applicant may file under the following alternate procedure if notice is given as required in (a) above. The application shall include the following:

(i) a statement that no opposition for hearing is expected and why;

ii) a map outlining the spacing unit(s) to be pooled showing the nature and percentage of the ownership interests and location of the proposed well;

(iii) the names and last known addresses of the interest owners to be pooled and the nature and percent of their interests and an attestation that a diligent search has been conducted of all public records in the county where the well is located and of phone directories, including computer searches;

(iv) the names of the formations and pools to be pooled (Note: The Division cannot pool a spacing unit larger in size than provided in these rules or applicable special pool orders);

(v) a statement as to whether the pooled unit is for gas and/or oil production (see note under iv, above);

(vi) written evidence of attempts made to gain voluntary agreement including but not limited to copies of relevant correspondence;

(vii) geological map(s) of the formation(s) to be tested and a geological and engineering assessment of the risk involved in the drilling of the well and a proposed risk penalty to be assessed against any working interest owner who does not pay its share of

estimated well costs;

(viii) proposed overhead charges (combined fixed rates) to be applied during drilling and production operations along with the basis for such charges;

(ix) the location and proposed depth of the well to be drilled on the pooled units; and

(x) a copy of the Authorization for Expenditure (AFE) to be submitted to the interest owners in the well.

[Rn, 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(2), 7-15-99, A, 7-15-99]

(c) All submittals required shall be accompanied by sworn and notarized statements by those persons who prepared the submittals attesting that the information is correct and complete to the best of their knowledge and belief. [Rn, 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(3), 7-15-99, A, 7-15-99]

(d) All unopposed pooling applications will be set for hearing. If the Division finds the application complete, the information submitted with the application will constitute the record in the case and an order will be issued based on the record. [Rn, 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(4), 7-15-99, A, 7-15-99]

(e) At the request of any interested person or upon the Division's own initiative, any pooling application submitted shall be set for full hearing with oral testimony by the applicant. [Rn, 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(4), 7-15-99; A, 7-15-99]

(2) Unorthodox Well Locations: [1-1-87...2-1-96; Rn, 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(5), 7-15-99; A, 7-15-99]

(a) Definition: "Affected persons" are the following persons owning interests in the adjoining spacing units:

1. the Division-designated operator;
2. in the absence of an operator, any lessee whose interest is evidenced by a written document of conveyance either of record or known to the applicant as of the date the application is filed; and
3. in the absence of an operator or lessee, any mineral interest owner whose interest is evidenced by a written document of conveyance either of record or known to the applicant as of the date the application was filed.

In the event the operator of the proposed unorthodox well is also the operator of an existing adjoining spacing unit and ownership is not common between the adjoining spacing unit and the spacing unit containing the proposed unorthodox well, then "affected persons" include all working interest owners in that spacing unit. [1-1-87...2-1-96; N, 7-15-99]

(b) If the proposed location is unorthodox by being located closer to the outer boundary of the spacing unit than permitted by rule, notice shall be given to the affected persons in the adjoining spacing units towards which the unorthodox location encroaches. [Rn. 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(5).(a), 7-15-99, A. 7-15-99]

(c) If the proposed location is unorthodox by being located in a different quarter-quarter section or quarter section than provided in special pool orders, notice shall be given to all affected persons. [Rn, 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(5).(a), A, 7-15-99]

(3) Non-Standard Proration Unit:

Notice shall be given to all owners of interests in the mineral estate to be excluded from the proration unit in the quarter-quarter section (for 40-acre pools or formations), the one-half quarter section (for 80-acre pools or formations), the quarter section (for 160-acre pools or formations), the half section (for 320-acre pools or formations), or section (for 640-acre pools or formations) in which the non-standard unit is located and to such other persons as required by the Division. [1-1-87...2-1-96; Rn. 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(6), 7-15-99, A, 7-15-99]

(4) Special Pool Orders Regulating or Affecting a Specific Pool:

(a) Except for non-standard proration unit applications, if the application involves changing the amount of acreage to be dedicated to a well, notice shall be given to:

- (i) all Division-designated operators in the pool; and
- (ii) all owners of interests in the mineral estate in existing spacing units with producing wells.

(b) If the application involves other matters, notice shall be given to:

- (i) all Division-designated operators in the pool; and
- (ii) all Division-designated operators of wells within the same formation as the pool and within one (1) mile of the outer boundary of the pool which have not been assigned to another pool. [1-1-87...2-1-96; Rn, 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(7), 7-15-99, A, 7-15-99]

(5) Special Orders Regarding any Division-Designated Potash Area:

Notice shall be given to all potash lessees, oil and gas operators, oil and gas lessees and unleased mineral interest owners within the designated potash area. [1-1-86...2-1-96; Rn, 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(8); A, 7-15-99]

(a) through (d). The material on unorthodox locations was moved to 19 NMAC N.1207.A.(2). [1-1-86...2-1-96; A. 7-15-99]

(6) Downhole Commingling:

Notice shall be given to all owners of interests in the mineral estate in the spacing unit if ownership is not common for all commingled zones within the spacing unit. [1-1-86...2-1-96; Rn. 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(9), 7-15-99, A, 7-15-99]

(7) Surface Disposal of Produced Water or Other Fluids:

Notice shall be given to any surface owner within one-half mile of the site. [1-1-86...2-1-96; Rn. 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(10), 7-15-99, A, 7-15-99]

(8) Adjudications not listed above:

Notice shall be given as required by the Division. [1-1-86...2-1-96; Rn. 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(11), 7-15-99, A, 7-15-99]

(9) This paragraph has been moved and renumbered to 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(6). [1-1-86...2-1-96; A, 7-15-99]

(10) This paragraph has been moved and renumbered to 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(7). [1-1-86...2-1-96; A, 7-15-99]

(11) This paragraph has been moved and renumbered to 19 NMAC 15.N.1207.A.(8). [1-1-86...2-1-96; A, 7-15-99]

1207.B. Type and Content of Notice. Any notice required by this rule shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the last known address of the person to whom notice is to be given at least 20 days prior to the date of hearing of the application and shall include: a copy of the application; the date, time and place of the hearing; and the means by which protests may be made. [1-1-86...2-1-96; A, 7-15-99]

1207.C. At the hearing, the applicant shall make a record, either by testimony or affidavit signed by the applicant or its authorized representative, that: (a) the notice provisions of this rule have been complied with; (b) the applicant has conducted a good-faith diligent effort to find the correct address of all persons entitled to notice; and (c) pursuant to this rule, notice has been given at that correct address as required by this rule. In addition, the record shall contain the name and address of each person to whom notice was sent and, where proof of receipt is available, a copy of the proof. [1-1-86...2-1-96; A, 7-15-99]

1207.D. Evidence of failure to provide notice as required in this rule may, upon proper showing, be considered cause for reopening the case. [1-1-86...2-1-96; A, 7-15-99]

1207.E. In the case of an administrative application where the required notice was sent and a timely filed protest was made, the Division shall notify the applicant and the protesting party in writing that the case has been set for hearing and the date of the hearing. No further notice is required. [7-15-99]

**STATE OF NEW MEXICO
ENERGY, MINERALS, AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION**

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

*Case No. 12119
Order No. R-11231*

**APPLICATION OF OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION TO AMEND DIVISION
RULE 104 (19 NMAC 15.C.104) PERTAINING TO WELL SPACING.**

ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

BY THE COMMISSION:

This case came on for hearing at 9 o'clock a.m. on August 12, 1999, at Santa Fe, New Mexico, before the Oil Conservation Commission of New Mexico, hereinafter referred to as the "Commission."

NOW, on this 12th day of August, 1999, the Commission, a quorum being present, having considered the record,

FINDS THAT:

(1) Due public notice has been given and the Commission has jurisdiction of this case and its subject matter.

(2) Evidence presented indicated developments in 3-D technology and the increasing need of operators to drill/exploit smaller and smaller reservoirs has resulted in the need for an expansion of allowable areas in which to drill.

(3) The evidence indicated that Division Rule 104 is in need of amendment to relax the external and internal well setback requirements to allow operators greater latitude in locating wells so that additional oil and gas reserves can be accessed, thereby preventing waste.

(4) Evidence also indicated that allowing an optional infill well on a 320-acre unit will substantially improve gas recovery by allowing operators to locate wells at more optimum locations, thereby preventing waste.


(5) Using statewide 660-setbacks to any quarter section line for both 160 and 320 acre spacing provides operators a uniform setback for their well location decisions. This will also eliminate the "standup/laydown" orientation decision sometimes encountered when locating wells, which can pose a problem for operators and result in unnecessary gamesmanship. Since 660 feet is already allowed in cases where the side boundary of a 320-acre unit is the relevant boundary, changing the end boundary setback from 1650 feet to 660 feet should not, in effect, result in any increase in the impairment of correlative rights and will eliminate the 320-acre unit orientation decision.

(2) Rule 104 shall be effective as of the date of its publication in the New Mexico Register.

(3) Jurisdiction of this case is retained for the entry of such further orders as the Commission may deem necessary.

(4) Done at Santa Fe, New Mexico, on the day and year hereinabove designated.

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
OIL CONSERVATION COMMISSION



JAMI BAILEY, Member



ROBERT L. LEE, Member



LORI WROTENBERY, Chairman



S E A L

EXHIBIT "A"

CASE NO. 12119

ORDER NO. R-11231

104 WELL SPACING AND LOCATION

104.A. CLASSIFICATION OF WELLS: WILDCAT AND DEVELOPMENT WELLS

(1) WILDCAT WELL

- (a) In San Juan, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, and McKinley Counties a wildcat well is any well to be drilled the spacing unit of which is a distance of two miles or more from:

 - (i) the outer boundary of any defined pool that has produced oil or gas from the formation to which the well is projected to be drilled; and
 - (ii) any well that has produced oil or gas from the formation to which the proposed well is projected to be drilled.
- (b) In all counties except San Juan, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, and McKinley, a wildcat well is any well to be drilled the spacing unit of which is a distance of one mile or more from:

 - (i) the outer boundary of any defined pool that has produced oil or gas from the formation to which the well is projected to be drilled; and
 - (ii) any well that has produced oil or gas from the formation to which the proposed well is projected.

(2) DEVELOPMENT WELL

- (a) Any well that is not a wildcat well shall be classified as a development well for the nearest pool that has produced oil or gas from the formation to which the well is projected to be drilled. Such development well shall be spaced, drilled, operated, and produced in accordance with the rules in effect for that pool, provided the well is completed in that pool.

(2) 320-ACRE SPACING applies to any deep gas well in Lea, Chaves, Eddy or Roosevelt County, defined as a well that is projected to be drilled to a gas producing formation or is within a defined gas pool in the Wolfcamp or an older formation. Such well shall be located on a spacing unit consisting of 320 surface contiguous acres, more or less, comprising any two contiguous quarter sections of a single section that is a legal subdivision of the U.S. Public Land Surveys provided that:

- (a) the initial well on a 320-acre unit is located no closer than 660 feet to the outer boundary of the quarter section on which the well is located and no closer than 10 feet to any quarter-quarter section line or subdivision inner boundary;
- (b) only one infill well on a 320-acre unit shall be allowed provided that the well is located in the quarter section of the 320-acre unit not containing the initial well and is no closer than 660 feet to the outer boundary of the quarter section and no closer than 10 feet to any quarter-quarter section line or subdivision inner boundary; and
- (c) the Division-designated operator for the infill well is the same operator currently designated by the Division for the initial well.

(3) 160-ACRE SPACING applies to any other gas well not covered above. Such well shall be located in a spacing unit consisting of 160 surface contiguous acres, more or less, substantially in the form of a square which is a quarter section and a legal subdivision of the U.S. Public Land Surveys and shall be located no closer than 660 feet to any outer boundary of such unit and no closer than 10 feet to any quarter-quarter section or subdivision inner boundary.

104.D. ACREAGE ASSIGNMENT

(1) Well Tests and Classification. It is the responsibility of the operator of any wildcat or development gas well to which more than 40 acres has been dedicated to conduct a potential test within 30 days following completion of the well and to file the test with the Division within 10 days following completion of the test. (See Rule 401)

- (a) The date of completion for a gas well is the date of the conclusion of active completion work on the well.
- (b) If the Division determines that a well should not be classified as a gas well, the Division will reduce the acreage dedicated to the well to the standard acreage for an oil well.
- (c) Failure of the operator to file the test within the specified time will also subject the well to such acreage reduction.

- (d) The applicant shall submit a statement attesting that the applicant, on or before the date the application was submitted to the Division, sent notification to the affected persons by submitting a copy of the application, including a copy of the plat described in (c) above, by certified mail, return receipt requested, advising them that if they have an objection it must be filed in writing within 20 days from the date the Division receives the application. The Director may approve the application upon receipt of waivers from all the notified persons or if no person has filed an objection within the 20-day period.
- (e) The Director may set for hearing any application for administrative approval.

(3) Number of Wells Per Spacing Unit. Exceptions to the provisions of statewide rules or special pool orders concerning the number of wells allowed per spacing unit may be permitted by the Director only after notice and opportunity for hearing. Notice shall be given to those affected persons defined in Rule 1207.A.(2).

104.E. FORMS

Form C-102 "Well Location and Acreage Dedication Plat" for any well shall designate the exact legal subdivision dedicated to the well. Form C-101 "Application for Permit to Drill, Deepen, or Plug Back" will not be approved without an acreage designation on Form C-102.

104.F. UNORTHODOX LOCATIONS

(1) Well locations for producing wells and/or injection wells that are unorthodox based on the requirements of B above and are necessary for an efficient production and injection pattern within a secondary recovery, tertiary recovery, or pressure maintenance project are hereby authorized, provided that the unorthodox location within the project is no closer than the required minimum distance to the outer boundary of the lease or unitized area, and no closer than 10 feet to any quarter-quarter section line or subdivision inner boundary. These locations shall only require such prior approvals as are necessary for an unorthodox location.

(2) The Director may grant an exception to the well location requirements of B and C above or special pool orders after notice and opportunity for hearing when the exception is necessary to prevent waste or protect correlative rights.

(3) Applications for administrative approval pursuant to F(2) above shall be submitted to the Division's Santa Fe Office accompanied by (a) a plat showing the spacing unit, the proposed unorthodox well location and the adjoining spacing units and wells; (b) a list of affected persons as defined in Rule 1207.A(2); and (c) information evidencing the need for the exception. Notice shall be given as required in Rule 1207.A(2).

- (a) Applications for administrative approval shall be submitted to the Division's Santa Fe Office and accompanied by: (i) a plat showing the dimensions and acreage involved, the ownership of such acreage, the location of all existing and proposed wells and all adjoining spacing units; (ii) a list of affected persons as defined in Rule 1207.A(2); and (iii) a statement discussing the reasons for the pooling or communitization.
- (b) The applicant shall submit a statement attesting that the applicant, on or before the date the application was submitted to the Division, sent notification to the affected persons by submitting a copy of the application, including a copy of the plat described in (a) above, by certified mail, return receipt requested, advising them that if they have an objection it must be filed in writing within 20 days from the date the Division receives the application. The Director may approve the application upon receipt of waivers from all the notified persons or if no person has filed an objection within the 20-day period.
- (c) The Director may set for hearing any application for administrative approval.

(2) The Division may consider the common ownership and common lease requirements met if the applicant furnishes with the application a copy of an executed pooling agreement communitizing the tracts involved.

[1-1-50...2-1-96; A, 6-30-97; A, 8-31-99]