

R649. Natural Resources; Oil, Gas and Mining; Oil and Gas.

R649-1. Oil and Gas Definitions.

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"Adjudicative proceeding" means an agency action or proceeding that determines the legal rights, duties, privileges, immunities, or other legal interests of one or more identifiable persons, including any agency actions to grant, deny, revoke, suspend, modify, annul, withdraw, or amend an authority, right, or license; and judicial review of any of such actions.

"Agency" means the Board of Oil, Gas and Mining and the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining including the director or division employees acting on behalf of or under the authority of the director or board.

"Agency head" means an individual or body of individuals in whom the ultimate legal authority of the agency is vested by statute.

"Application for Permit to Drill, Deepen or Plug Back" or "APD" means the Form 3 submission required under Section R649-3-4 with the division.

"Aquifer" means a geological formation including a group of formations or part of a formation that is capable of yielding a significant amount of water to a well or spring.

"Artificial Liner" means a pit liner made of material other than clay or other in-situ material that meets the requirements of Section R649-9-3, Permitting of Disposal Pits.

"Authorized Agent" means a representative of the director as authorized by the board.

"Authority for Expenditure" or "AFE" is a detailed written statement made in good faith by an operator memorializing the total estimated costs to be incurred in the drilling, testing, completion and equipping of a well for oil and gas operations.

"Barrel" means 42 gallons at 60 degrees Fahrenheit at atmospheric pressure.

"Board" means the Board of Oil, Gas and Mining.

"Carrier, Transporter or Taker" means any person moving or transporting oil or gas away from a well or lease or from any pool.

"Casing Pressure" means the pressure within the casing or between the casing and tubing at the wellhead.

"Central Disposal Facility" means a facility that is used by one or more producers for disposal of exempt E and P wastes and that the operator of the facility receives no monetary remuneration, other than operating cost sharing.

"Class II Injection Well" means a well that is used for:

1. the disposal of fluids that are brought to the surface in connection with conventional oil or natural gas production and that may be commingled with wastewater produced from the operation of a gas plant that is an integral part of production operations, unless that wastewater is classified as a hazardous waste at the time of injection;

2. enhanced recovery of oil or gas; or

3. storage of hydrocarbons that are liquids at standard temperature and pressure conditions.

"Closed System" means the use of a combination of solids control equipment including a shale shaker, flowline cleaner, desanders, desilters, mud cleaners, centrifuges, agitators, and any necessary pumps and piping incorporated in a series on the rig's steel mud tanks, or a self contained unit that eliminates the use of a reserve pit to dump and dilute drilling fluids for the removal of entrained drill solids. A closed system for the purpose of these rules may with Division approval include the use of a small pit to receive cuttings, but does not include the use of trenches for the collection of fluids of any kind.

"Coalbed Methane" means natural gas that is produced, or may be produced, from a coalbed and rock strata associated with the coalbed.

"Commercial Disposal Facility" means a disposal well, pit or treatment facility whose owner or operator receives compensation from others for the temporary storage, treatment, and disposal of produced water, drilling fluids, drill cuttings, completion fluids, and any other exempt E and P wastes, and whose primary business objective is to provide these services.

"Completion of a Well" means that the well has been adequately worked to be capable of producing oil or gas or that well testing as required by the division has been concluded.

"Confining Strata" refers to a body of material that is relatively impervious to the passage of liquid or gas and that occurs either below, above, or lateral to a more permeable material in such a way that it confines or limits the movement of liquids or gases that may be present.

"Correlative Rights" means the opportunity of each owner in a pool to produce his just and equitable share of the oil and gas in the pool without waste.

"Cubic Foot" of gas means the volume of gas contained in one cubic foot of space at a standard pressure base of 14.73 psia and a standard temperature base of 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

"Day" means a period of 24 consecutive hours.

"Development Wells" means any oil and gas producing wells other than wildcat wells.

"Director" means the executive and administrative head of the division.

"Disposal Facility" means an injection well, pit, treatment facility or combination thereof that receives E and P Wastes for the purpose of disposal. This includes both commercial and noncommercial facilities.

"Disposal Pit" means a lined or unlined pit approved for the disposal or storage of E and P Wastes.

"Division" means the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining.

"Drilling Fluid" means a circulating fluid usually called mud, that is introduced in a drill hole to lubricate the action of the rotary bit, remove the drilling cuttings, and control formation pressures.

"E and P Waste" means Exploration and Production Waste, and is defined as waste resulting from the drilling of and production from an oil and gas well as determined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), prior to January 1, 1992, to be exempt from Subtitle C of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA).

"Emergency Pit" means a pit used for containing any fluid at an operating well during an actual emergency or for a temporary period of time.

"Enhanced Recovery" means the process of introducing fluid or energy into a pool for the purpose of increasing the recovery of hydrocarbons from the pool.

"Enhanced Recovery Project" means the injection of liquids or hydrocarbon or non-hydrocarbon gases directly into a reservoir for the purpose of augmenting reservoir energy, modifying the properties of the fluids or gases in the reservoir, or changing the reservoir conditions to increase the recoverable oil, gas, or oil and gas through the joint use of two or more well bores.

"Entity" means a well or a group of wells that have identical division of interest, have the same operator, produce from the same formation, have product sales from a common tank, LACT meter, gas meter, or are in the same participating area of a properly designated unit. Entity number assignments are made by the division in cooperation with other state government agencies.

"Field" means the general area underlaid by one or more pools.

"Gas" means natural gas or natural gas liquids or other gas or any mixture thereof defined as follows:

1. "Natural Gas" means those hydrocarbons, other than oil and other than natural gas liquids separated from natural gas, that occur naturally in the gaseous phase in the reservoir and are produced and recovered at the wellhead in gaseous form. Natural gas includes coalbed methane.

2. "Natural Gas Liquids" means those hydrocarbons initially in reservoir natural gas, regardless of gravity, that are separated in gas processing plants from the natural gas as liquids at the surface through the process of condensation, absorption, adsorption, or other methods.

3. "Other Gas" means hydrogen sulfide (H₂S), carbon dioxide (CO₂), helium (He), nitrogen (N), and other nonhydrocarbon gases that occur naturally in the gaseous phase in the reservoir or are injected into the reservoir in connection with pressure maintenance, gas cycling, or other secondary or enhanced recovery projects.

"Gas-Oil Ratio" means the ratio of the number of cubic feet of natural gas produced to the number of barrels of oil concurrently produced during any stated period. The term GOR is synonymous with gas-oil ratio.

"Gas Processing Plant" means a facility in which liquefiable hydrocarbons are removed from natural gas, including wet gas or casinghead gas, and the remaining residue gas is conditioned for delivery for sale, recycling or other use.

"Gas Well" means any well capable of producing gas in substantial quantities that is not an oil well.

"Ground Water" means water in a zone of saturation below the ground surface.

"Hearing" means any matter heard before the board or its designated hearing examiner.

"Horizontal Well" means a well bore drilled laterally at an angle of at least 80 degrees to the vertical or with a horizontal projection exceeding one hundred feet measured from the initial point of penetration into the productive formation through the terminus of the lateral in the same common source of supply.

"Illegal Oil or Illegal Gas" means oil or gas that has been produced from any well within the state in violation of Title 40, Chapter 6, Board and Division of Oil, Gas and Mining, or any rule or order of the board.

"Illegal Product" means any product derived in whole or in part from illegal oil or illegal gas.

"Incremental Production" means that part of production that is achieved from an enhanced recovery project that would not have economically occurred under the reservoir conditions existing before the project and that has been approved by the division as incremental production.

"Injection or Disposal Well" means any Class II Injection Well used for the injection of air, gas, water or other substance into any underground stratum.

"Interest Owner" means a person owning an interest, which may include working interest, royalty interest, payment out of production, or any other interest, in oil or gas, or in the proceeds thereof.

"Joint Operating Agreement" or "JOA" is an agreement for the exploration, development, and production for oil, gas or other minerals between parties entitled to participate pursuant to the ownership of said minerals or leaseholds covering said minerals, which are subject to the contract area, which may be inclusive of a drilling unit, described therein.

"License" means a franchise, permit, certification, approval, registration, charter, or similar form of authorization required by statute.

"Load Oil" means any oil or liquid hydrocarbon that is used in any remedial operation in an oil or gas well.

"Log or Well Log" means the written record progressively describing the strata, water, oil or gas encountered in drilling a well with such additional information as is usually recorded in the normal procedure of drilling including electrical, radioactivity, or other similar conventional logs, a lithologic description of samples and drill stem test information.

"Multiple Zone Completion" means a well completion in which two or more separate zones, mechanically segregated one from the other, are produced simultaneously from the same well.

"Notice of Opportunity to Participate" means the written notice of opportunity to participate in a well for oil and gas operations required under Subsection 40-6-2(4) and (12) to be provided to an owner and which includes an offer to lease if the owner is an unleased owner, and an offer for the owner to directly participate financially, in proportion to the owner's interest in the drilling, testing, completion, equipping and operation of the subject well and which includes:

1. the approximate surface and, bottom hole location of the subject well by county, township, range, section, quarter-quarter section or substantially equivalent lot, and footages from directional section lines;

2. the proposed well name;

3. the proposed total distance from the surface of the ground to the terminus measured along the vertical and lateral components if the well is a horizontal well;

4. the proposed total depth;

5. the objective productive zone and the approximate depth and locations of producing intervals in the borehole;

6. the approximate date upon which the subject well was or will be spud;

7. a joint operating agreement proposed in good faith by the operator for operation of the drilling unit upon which the subject well is to be drilled;

8. an AFE for the subject well;

9. a statement that a refusal to agree to either lease or participate in the subject well may result in the imposition of the statutory risk compensation award allowed under Subsection 40-6-6.5(4)(d)(i)(D) of between 150% and 400% as determined by the board; and

10. a statement that any initial compulsory pooling order may apply to subsequent wells within the drilling unit including any statutory risk compensation award imposed under Utah law pursuant to Subsection 40-6-6.5(12).

"Oil" means crude oil or condensate or any mixture thereof, defined as follows:

1. "Crude Oil" means those hydrocarbons, regardless of gravity, that occur naturally in the liquid phase in the reservoir and are produced and recovered at the wellhead in liquid form.

2. "Condensate" means those hydrocarbons, regardless of gravity, that occur naturally in the gaseous phase in the reservoir that are separated from the natural gas as liquids through the process of condensation either in the reservoir, in the well bore or at the surface in field separators.

3. "Oil and Gas" may not include gaseous or liquid substances derived from coal, oil shale, tar sands or other hydrocarbons classified as synthetic fuel.

"Oil and Gas Field" means a geographical area overlying an oil and gas pool.

"Oil Well" means any well capable of producing oil in substantial quantities.

"Operator" means the person who has been designated by the owners or the board to operate a well or unit.

"Operatorship" means the exclusive right, privilege and obligation of exercising any rights granted by the owners or the board to act as operator of a well or drilling unit which rights are necessary and effective for prospecting for, producing, storing, allocating and distributing oil and gas extracted from a well or a drilling unit.

"Owner" means the person who has the right to drill into and produce from a reservoir and to appropriate the oil and gas that they produce, either for themselves and others.

"Party" means the board, division, or other person commencing an adjudicative proceeding, any respondents, any persons permitted by the board to intervene in the proceeding, and any persons authorized by statute or agency rule to participate as parties in an adjudicative proceeding.

"Person" means an individual, group of individuals, partnership, corporation, association, political subdivision or its units, governmental subdivision or its units, public or private organization or entity of any character, or another agency.

"Pit" means an earthen surface impoundment constructed to retain fluids and oil field wastes.

"Pollution" means such contamination or other alteration of the physical, chemical or biological properties of any waters of the state, or the discharge of any liquid, gaseous or solid substance into any waters of the state in such manner as will create a nuisance or render such waters harmful, detrimental or injurious to the public health, safety or welfare; to domestic, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, or other legitimate beneficial uses; or to livestock, wild animals, birds, fish or other aquatic life.

"Pool" means an underground reservoir containing a common accumulation of oil or gas or both. Each zone of a general structure that is completely separated from any other zone in the structure is a separate pool. "Common source of supply" and "reservoir" are synonymous with "pool."

"Preparation for Drilling" means:

1. mobilization of drilling equipment; or

2. erecting a drilling rig; or

3. diligently engaging in other work necessary to prepare the well site, including commencement of access road and pad construction.

"Presiding Officer" means an agency head, or an individual or body of individuals designated by the agency head, by the agency's rules, or by statute to conduct an adjudicative proceeding. The board, or its appointed hearing examiner, may be considered the presiding officer of any appeals or informal adjudicative proceedings that is commenced before the division as well as any adjudicative proceeding that is commenced before the board. The director or his designated agent may be considered a presiding officer for any informal adjudicative proceedings that is commenced before the division. If fairness to the parties is not compromised, an agency may substitute one presiding officer for another during any proceeding.

"Pressure Maintenance" means the injection of gas, water or other fluids into a reservoir, either to increase or maintain the existing pressure in such reservoir or to retard the natural decline in the reservoir pressure.

"Produced Water" means water produced in conjunction with the conventional production of oil or gas.

"Producer" means the owner or operator of a well capable of producing oil or gas.

"Producing Well" means a well capable of producing oil or gas.

"Product" means any commodity made from oil and gas.

"Production Facilities" means any storage, separation, treating, dehydration, artificial lift, power supply, compression, pumping, metering, monitoring, flowline, and other equipment directly associated with oil wells, gas wells or injection wells, prior to any processing plant or refinery.

"Purchaser or Transporter" means any person who, acting alone or jointly with any other person, by means of his own, an affiliated, or designated carrier, transporter or taker, shall directly or indirectly purchase, take or transport by any means whatsoever, or who shall otherwise remove from any well or lease, oil or gas produced from any pool, excepting royalty portions of oil or gas taken in kind by an interest owner who is not the operator.

"Recompletion" means any completion in a new perforated interval or pool within an established wellbore and approved as a recompletion by the division.

"Refinery" means a facility, other than a gas processing plant, where controlled operations are performed by which the physical and chemical characteristics of petroleum or petroleum products are changed.

"Reserve Pit" means a pit used to retain fluid during the drilling, completion, and testing of a well.

"Resource Detriment" means: damage, harm or detriment to the mineral estate or oil and gas formation; pollution or surface damages as specified in Section R649-3-15; damage, harm or detriment to the surface estate or Surface Land as defined in Subsection 40-6-2(25); damage to a Surface land owner's property as defined in Subsection 40-6-2(27); or damage, harm or detriment to livestock or wildlife.

"Respondent" means any person against whom an adjudicative proceeding is initiated whether by an agency or any other person.

"Seismic Operator" means a person who conducts seismic exploration for oil or gas, whether for themselves or as a contractor for others.

"Shut-in Well" means a well that is completed, is shown to be capable of production in paying quantities, and is not presently being operated.

"Spud In" means the first boring of a hole in the drilling of a well by any type of rig.

"State" means the State of Utah.

"Stratigraphic Test or Core Hole" means any hole drilled for the sole purpose of obtaining geological information. The general rules applicable to the drilling of a well will apply to the drilling of a stratigraphic test or core hole.

"Temporarily Abandoned Well" means a well that is completed, is shown not capable of production in paying quantities, and is not presently being operated.

"Temporary Spacing Unit" means a specified area of land designated by the board for purposes of determining well density and location. A temporary spacing unit may not be a drilling unit as provided for in Section 40-6-6, Drilling Units, and does not provide a basis for pooling the interest therein as does a drilling unit.

"Underground Source of Drinking Water" (USDW) means a fresh water aquifer or a portion thereof that supplies drinking water for human consumption or that contains less than 10,000 mg/l total dissolved solids and that is not an exempted aquifer under Section R649-5-4.

"Waste" means:

1. The inefficient, excessive or improper use or the unnecessary dissipation of oil or gas or reservoir energy.
2. The inefficient storing of oil or gas.
3. The locating, drilling, equipping, operating, or producing of any oil or gas well in a manner that causes reduction in the quantity of oil or gas ultimately recoverable from a reservoir under prudent and economical operations, or that causes unnecessary wells to be drilled, or that causes the loss or destruction of oil or gas either at the surface or subsurface.
4. The production of oil or gas in excess of:
 - 4.1. Transportation or storage facilities.
 - 4.2. The amount reasonably required to be produced in the proper drilling, completing, testing, or operating of a well or otherwise utilized on the lease from which it is produced.
5. Underground or above ground waste in the production or storage of oil or gas.

"Waste Crude Oil Treatment Facility" means any facility or site constructed or used for the purpose of wholly or partially reclaiming, treating, processing, cleaning, purifying or in any manner making non-merchantable waste crude oil marketable.

"Well" means an oil or gas well, injection or disposal well, or a hole drilled for the purpose of producing oil or gas or both. The definition of well may not include water wells, or seismic, stratigraphic test, core hole, or other exploratory holes drilled for the purpose of obtaining geological information only.

"Well Site" means the areas that are directly disturbed during the drilling and subsequent use of, or affected by production facilities directly associated with any oil well, gas well or injection well.

"Wildcat Wells" means oil and gas producing wells that are drilled and completed in a pool in which a well has not been previously completed as a well capable of producing in commercial quantities.

"Willful Violation" means any action or inaction done with conscious objective or desire to engage in the action or inaction that a reasonably prudent person would know is likely to cause a violation.

"Working Interest Owner" means the owner of an interest in oil or gas burdened with a share of the expenses of developing and operating the property.

"Workover" means any operation designed to sustain, to restore, or to increase the production rate, the ultimate recovery, or the reservoir pressure system of a well or group of wells and approved as a workover, a secondary recovery, a tertiary recovery, or a pressure maintenance project by the division. The definition may not include operations that are conducted principally as routine maintenance or the replacement of worn or damaged equipment.

KEY: oil and gas law

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Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: 40-6-1 et seq.