

NEBRASKA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

Title 122 - NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Chapter 35 – PLUGGING, ABANDONMENT, AND RESTORATION

001 Prior to plugging, abandonment, or restoration activities for any Class I, III, IV, V injection well, or mineral production well, the permittee shall submit a written abandonment plan to the Director for approval. No injection well or mineral production well shall be plugged and/or abandoned until the procedures outlined in the submitted abandonment plan has been approved by the Director. No restoration activities shall be initiated until the submitted abandonment plan has been approved by the Director.

002 A plug shall be used when the injection well or mineral production well intercepts more than one aquifer or the geology/hydrogeology of the area in which the well is located constitutes plugging as determined by the Director.

003 A plug shall consist of cement, permanent mechanical bridge plug, or, use of other plugging materials, in a manner approved by the Director which shall not allow the movement of fluids either into or between underground sources of drinking water.

004 The well to be plugged and/or abandoned shall be in a state of static equilibrium with the fluid weight equalized top to bottom, either by circulating the fluid in the well at least once or by a comparable method approved by the Director, prior to the placement of the plug(s) and/or surface restoration.

005 Restoration activities may include surface and/or aquifer restoration.

006 In the case of a Class III well field that underlies or is in an aquifer which has been exempted, the abandonment plan shall address the restoration of the aquifer (Chapter 16, 008 and Chapter 11, 006.26).

007 The abandonment plan may include the plugging, abandonment, and restoration procedures as outlined in the sections below.

007.01 Method and materials used to stabilize the well.

007.02 Plugging information shall include but not be limited to:

007.02A The type and number of plugs to be used;

007.02B The method for placement of the plugs by one of the following:

007.02B1 The Balance Method;

007.02B2 The Dump Bailer Method;

007.02B3 The Two Plug Method; or

007.02B4 An alternative method approved by the Director.

007.02C The placement of each plug including the elevation of the top and bottom; and

007.02D The type, grade, and quantity of plugging material to be used.

007.03 Abandonment information shall include but not be limited to:

007.03A The type, grade, and quantity of the abandonment fluid to be used;

007.03B The method for placement of the abandonment fluid; and

007.03C The method and type of surface completion.

007.04 Restoration information shall include but not be limited to:

007.04A The type of restoration to be completed;

007.04B The surface area to be restored; and

007.04C The process for restoration.

008 After completion of the plugging, abandonment, or restoration procedures, an affidavit, setting forth in detail the significant data in connection with the well (including well details) and the procedure used in plugging, abandonment, or restoration, signed by a qualified witness to the plugging, abandonment, or restoration procedures and duly notarized, shall be filed with the Department, within ninety days after plugging, abandonment, or restoration is completed. The Department reserves the right to require the operator to replug and/or abandon any well where it can be determined that the plugging and/or abandonment procedure was not effective due to failure of plugging and abandonment materials or other difficulty. The Department also reserves the right

to require the permittee to restore areas (including aquifers) that were not restored properly or to standards outlined in the approved abandonment plan.

Enabling Legislation: Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 81-1504(2)(13); 81-1505(9)(15)

Legal Citation: Title 122, Ch.35, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality