

This rule was filed as Rule G-303.

TITLE 19 NATURAL RESOURCES AND WILDLIFE
CHAPTER 14 GEOTHERMAL POWER
PART 73 PLUGGING AND TEMPORARY ABANDONMENT

19.14.73.1 ISSUING AGENCY: Energy and Minerals Department, Oil Conservation Division, P.O. Box 2088, Santa Fe, New Mexico.
[Recompiled 12/31/01]

19.14.73.2 SCOPE: [RESERVED]
[Recompiled 12/31/01]

19.14.73.3 STATUTORY AUTHORITY: [RESERVED]
[Recompiled 12/31/01]

19.14.73.4 DURATION: [RESERVED]
[Recompiled 12/31/01]

19.14.73.5 EFFECTIVE DATE: [November 15, 1983]
[Recompiled 12/31/01]

19.14.73.6 OBJECTIVE: [RESERVED]
[Recompiled 12/31/01]

19.14.73.7 DEFINITIONS: [RESERVED]
[Recompiled 12/31/01]

19.14.73.8 PLUGGING: Before any well is abandoned, it shall be plugged in a manner that will permanently confine all fluids in the separate strata originally containing them. This operation shall be accomplished by the use of mud-laden fluid, cement and plugs, used singly or in combination, as may be approved by the division. In addition, an adequate cement plug at the surface shall be installed to permanently prevent intrusion of any substance into the well. The exact location of abandoned wells shall be shown by a steel marker at least four inches in diameter set in concrete and extending at least four feet above mean ground level. The name and number of the well and its location (quarter-quarter, section, township and range) shall be welded, stamped, or otherwise permanently engraved into the metal of the marker. seismic, core, thermal gradient or other wells less than 500 feet deep and low-temperature thermal wells less than 500 feet deep shall be plugged in accordance with the applicable provisions recited above but permanent markers shall not be required on such wells.
[Recompiled 12/31/01]

19.14.73.9 TEMPORARY ABANDONMENT: No well shall be temporarily abandoned for a period in excess of six months unless a permit for such temporary abandonment has been approved by the division. Such permit shall be for a period not to exceed six months and shall be requested from the Santa Fe office of the division by filing form G-103 in duplicate. No such permit shall be approved unless evidence is furnished that the condition of the well is such as to prevent damage to any producing zone, migration of fluids from one zone to another, the waste or contamination of useable underground waters or other natural resources and the leakage of any substance at the surface, all as substantiated by the filing of form G-105, geothermal resources well log, and form G-106, geothermal resources well summary report, with the request for a temporary abandonment permit. Filing of these forms may be delayed as provided in Rule G-205 B [now 19.14.56.9 NMAC] and Rule G-206 B [now 19.14.57.9 NMAC] if a division representative has had access to and has inspected the data and materials described in Rule G-200 B [now 19.14.51.9 NMAC] . Also see Rule G-203 A [now subsection A of 19.14.54.8 NMAC] and Rule G-203 C(3) [now Paragraph (3) of Subsection C of 19.14.54.8 NMAC].

A. The Santa Fe office of the division shall have authority to grant one extension to the permit for temporary abandonment. Such extension shall not exceed one year and shall be requested in the same manner as the

original permit for temporary abandonment. No extension shall be approved unless good cause therefor is shown, and evidence is furnished that the continued condition of the well is as described above.

B. Upon expiration of the permit for temporary abandonment and any extension thereto, the well shall be put to beneficial use or shall be permanently plugged and abandoned, unless it can be shown to the division after notice and hearing that good cause exists why the well should not be plugged and abandoned, and a permit for further temporary abandonment should be issued. No such permit for further temporary abandonment shall be approved by the division unless a one-well plugging bond for the well, in an amount satisfactory to the division, but not to exceed \$10,000.00, is on file with the division to ensure future plugging of the well.

C. The requirements of the paragraph immediately above may be waived and additional extensions granted for thermal gradient wells and in those cases where it can be shown that a contract exists for the construction of electric power plants and such plants are being designated, on order, or under construction, where facilities are being designed or are under construction for direct use of geothermal energy, or in the case where a geothermal reservoir has been discovered and there is an ongoing exploration program of the reservoir to determine its commercial feasibility.

[Recompiled 12/31/01]

19.14.73.10 DRILLING WELLS: When drilling operations on a well have been suspended for 60 days, the well shall be plugged and abandoned unless a permit for temporary abandonment has been obtained for the well in accordance with Section B [now 19.14.73.9 NMAC] above.

[Recompiled 12/31/01]

HISTORY OF 19.14.73 NMAC:

Pre-NMAC History: The material in this Part was derived from that previously filed with the State Records Center and Archives:

Rule G-303, Plugging and Temporary Abandonment, 11/1/83.

History of Repealed Material: [RESERVED]