



August 17, 2021

Industry Guidance Bulletin 21-002
Suspended Well Guidance

Introduction: Suspension of a well or the renewal of the suspension of a well may be approved as outlined in 20 AAC 25.110. This guidance bulletin clarifies the requirements for initial suspension, suspension renewal and well-site inspections as well as timing.

Initial Suspension.

1. Application for Sundry Approval (Form 10-403) must be approved before operations to suspend a well commence.
2. Well site inspection is required within 12 months following the initial suspension.
3. Initial suspension is valid for 10 years from the date of approval unless a different expiration date is specified by the AOGCC.

Suspension Renewal.

1. Application for Sundry Approval (Form 10-403) must be approved before renewal is effective.
2. Submit a renewal application at least 60 days before the expiration of an existing suspension.
3. A well-site inspection must be completed within 24 months before expiration of the current suspension approval.

Suspended Well Inspection.

1. Suspended well inspections must be performed when the well and surrounding area are free of snow and ice.
2. Operator shall provide the AOGCC notice of at least 10 days before any inspection using the web notice form (<http://aogweb.state.ak.us/TestWitnessNotification/>).
3. Operator shall provide the opportunity for AOGCC inspectors to accompany the operator on the inspection tour.
4. Initial suspended well inspection is required within 12 months after initial suspension.
5. Subsequent well site inspection:
 - a. Within 24 months before September 30 of every calendar year ending in 0 or 5. This well site inspection is not required if the initial inspection occurred within the prior 24-month period.
 - b. Within 24 months before the submission of a request for suspension renewal.

6. Report of Sundry Well Operations (Form 10-404) required within 30 days after any suspended well inspection.

Well site Inspection Guidance.

1. Operator representative must be present for the AOGCC suspended well inspection.
2. Measure and record well pressures.^{1,2}
3. Photos taken during the well site inspection must include:
 - a. Well sign
 - b. Wellhead from all four sides
 - c. Down into the cellar
 - d. Any gauges that are installed, permanently or temporarily, on the wellhead to show readings
 - e. Pictures from the wellhead in all directions to show any debris
4. If the well site is in a remote location (not accessible by AOGCC-operated vehicle), it is the responsibility of the operator to provide transportation for the AOGCC inspector.
5. Inspecting wells annually is a good practice.

Please share this Guidance Bulletin with appropriate members of your organizations. Questions regarding this guidance should be directed to Victoria Loepf at (907) 793-1247 or victoria.loepf@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Price

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Jeremy M. Price
Chair

¹ Wells wrapped must be uncovered to check for pressures. Water and snow must be removed.

² The operator must have a procedure for managing water in the cellar, especially before freezing conditions occur. Instances have occurred where ice in the well cellar of suspended wells has damaged an annulus outlet and the equipment attached (valves, valve handles, gauges, flanges). Diesel and other annuli fluids have been released and leached into the adjacent well pad