

**RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS
OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL
HEARINGS SECTION**

OIL AND GAS DOCKET NO. 01-0248248

ENFORCEMENT ACTION FOR ALLEGED VIOLATIONS COMMITTED BY BEDFORD OIL & GAS, INC. (061600), AS TO THE DIKES ESTATE (13395) LEASE, WELL NO. 1, PILGRIM (AUSTIN CHALK) FIELD, GONZALES COUNTY, TEXAS

FINAL ORDER

The Commission finds that after statutory notice the captioned enforcement proceeding was heard by the examiner on February 12, 2009, and that the respondent, Bedford Oil & Gas, Inc. (061600), failed to appear or respond to the Notice of Hearing. Pursuant to § 1.49 of the Commission's General Rules of Practice and Procedure [Tex. R. R. Comm'n, 16 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 1.49] and after being duly submitted to the Railroad Commission of Texas at conference held in its offices in Austin, Texas, the Commission makes the following findings of fact and conclusions of law.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Bedford Oil & Gas, Inc. (061600), ("Respondent") was given Notice of Hearing by certified mail, addressed to Respondent's Attorney, Skipper Lay, which was signed and returned to the Commission.
2. The returned certified receipt (green card) that was attached to the Original Complaint and the Notice of Hearing mailed to Respondent's Attorney, Skipper Lay, was signed and returned to the Commission on December 18, 2008. The certified receipt has been on file with the Commission for 15 days, exclusive of the day of receipt and day of issuance.
3. On February 27, 2007, Respondent, a Corporation, filed an Organization Report (Form P-5) with the Commission reporting that its officers consisted of the following individual(s): Edward A. Stam; President.
4. Edward A. Stam, was a person in a position of ownership or control of respondent, as defined by Texas Natural Resources Code Section 91.114, during the time period of the violations of Commission rules committed by respondent
5. The violations of Commission rules committed by respondent are related to safety and the control of pollution.

6. Respondent designated itself to the Commission as the operator of Well No. 1 on the Dikes Estate (13395) Lease ("subject well"/"subject lease") by filing a Form P-4 (Producer's Transportation Authority and Certificate of Compliance) with the Commission effective on September 1, 2003.
7. According to Commission records the Respondent's Form P-5 (Organization Report) became delinquent on March 1, 2008. Respondent had a \$50,000.00 Bond as its financial assurance at the time of its last P-5 renewal.
8. Commission District inspections were conducted on June 29, 2005, August 2, 2005, October 14, 2005, March 30, 2006 and May 18, 2006 for the Dikes Estate (13395) Lease. The signs or identification required to be posted at the lease entrance and the tank displayed incorrect information. A follow up inspection conducted on August 4, 2008 showed that signs were posted at the lease entrance and the tank had been removed.
9. Commission District inspections were conducted on June 29, 2005, August 2, 2005, October 14, 2005, March 30, 2006 and May 18, 2006 for the Dikes Estate (13395) Lease. The sign or identification required to be posted at the well was missing. A follow up inspection conducted on August 4, 2008 showed that the sign at the well was posted, but did not have a well number posted.
10. Failure to properly identify a well by the posting of the sign required by Statewide Rule 3 has the potential for causing confusion and delay in remedying a violation or emergency and poses a threat to the public health and safety.
11. Production from the subject well ceased in or before February 2002. No further production was reported until February 2006, when 75 barrels of production was reported with no dispositions. No production has been reported since February 2006.
12. The Statewide 14(b)(2) plugging extension for Well No. 1 on the Dikes Estate (13395) Lease was denied on February 29, 2008, due to Respondent's delinquent P-5.
13. The subject well has not been properly plugged in accordance with, and is not otherwise in compliance with Statewide Rule 14.
14. Usable quality groundwater in the area is likely to be contaminated by migrations or discharges of saltwater and other oil and gas wastes from the subject well. Unplugged wellbores constitute a cognizable threat to the public health and safety because of the potential for pollution.
15. The estimated cost to the State of plugging the subject well is \$16,500.00.
16. Commission District inspections were conducted on June 29, 2005, August 2, 2005, October 14, 2005, March 30, 2006 and May 18, 2006 on the Dikes Estate (13395) Lease. Respondent had failed to properly screen a tank. A followup inspection conducted on August 4, 2008 indicated that the tank had been removed.

17. The Respondent has not demonstrated good faith since it failed to timely plug or otherwise place the subject lease and subject well in compliance after being notified of the violations by the District Office and failed to appear at the hearing to explain its inaction.
18. The Respondent has a prior history of Commission rule violations including the following docket(s):

Docket No. 01-0245721; Agreed Order Served: August 22, 2006; and
Docket No. 01-0252071; Final Order Served: January 28, 2008.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Proper notice was issued by the Railroad Commission to respondent and to all other appropriate persons legally entitled to notice.
2. All things necessary to the Commission attaining jurisdiction over the subject matter and the parties in this hearing have been performed or have occurred.
3. Respondent is in violation of Commission Statewide Rules 3, 14(b)(2) and 22(b).
4. Respondent is responsible for maintaining the subject lease in compliance with Statewide Rule 3, which requires that each property that produces oil, gas or geothermal resources and each oil, gas or geothermal resource well and tank, or other approved crude oil measuring facility shall post signs or identification.
5. Respondent is responsible for maintaining the subject lease in compliance with Statewide Rule 22(b), which requires that an operator must screen, net, cover or otherwise render harmless to birds, open top tanks and pits associated with exploration, development and production of oil and gas, including transportation of oil and gas by pipeline.
6. Respondent is responsible for maintaining the subject lease and subject well in compliance with all applicable Commission rules according to Statewide Rules 14, 58, and 79 and Chapters 89 and 91 of the Texas Natural Resources Code.
7. The documented violations committed by the respondent constitute acts deemed serious, a hazard to the public health, and demonstrate a lack of good faith pursuant to TEX. NAT. RES. CODE ANN. §81.0531(c).

8. As a person in a position of ownership or control of respondent at the time respondent violated Commission rules related to safety and the control of pollution, Edward A. Stam, and any other organization in which he may hold a position of ownership or control, shall be subject to the restrictions of Texas Natural Resource Code Section 91.114(a)(2) for a period of no more than seven years from the date the order entered in this matter becomes final, or until the conditions that constituted the violations herein are corrected or are being corrected in accordance with a schedule to which the Commission and the organization have agreed; and all administrative, civil, and criminal penalties and all cleanup and plugging costs incurred by the State relating to those conditions are paid or are being paid in accordance with a schedule to which the Commission and the organization have agreed, whichever is earlier.

IT IS ORDERED THAT within 30 days from the day immediately following the date this order becomes final:

1. Bedford Oil & Gas, Inc. (061600), shall plug the Dikes Estate (13395) Lease, Well No. 1, Pilgrim (Austin Chalk) Field, Gonzales County, Texas in compliance with applicable Commission rules and regulations; and
2. Bedford Oil & Gas, Inc. (061600), shall pay to the Railroad Commission of Texas, for disposition as provided by law, an administrative penalty in the amount of **THREE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS (\$3,250.00) less ONE THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED SEVENTY FIVE DOLLARS (\$1,375.00) already received.**

It is further **ORDERED** by the Commission that this order shall not be final and effective until 20 days after a party is notified of the Commission's order. A party is presumed to have been notified of the Commission's order three days after the date on which the notice is actually mailed. If a timely motion for rehearing is filed by any party at interest, this order shall not become final and effective until such motion is overruled, or if such motion is granted, this order shall be subject to further action by the Commission. Pursuant to TEX. GOV'T CODE § 2001.146(e), the time allotted for Commission action on a motion for rehearing in this case prior to its being overruled by operation of law, is hereby extended until 90 days from the date the parties are notified of the order.

All requested findings of fact and conclusions of law which are not expressly adopted herein are denied. All pending motions and requests for relief not previously granted or granted herein are denied.

Noncompliance with the provisions of this order is subject to enforcement by the Attorney General and subject to civil penalties of up to \$10,000.00 per day per violation.

Done this 14th day of April 2009.

RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS

(Signatures affixed by Default Master Order dated April 14, 2009)

JD/sa