

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

**OIL AND GAS DOCKET NO. 09-0252789**

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**ENFORCEMENT ACTION FOR ALLEGED VIOLATIONS COMMITTED BY RASHER ENERGY, INC. (693688), AS TO THE TAYLOR -C - (14225) LEASE, WELL NOS. 1-4, 6, 8-12 AND 16, AND THE STERRETT (DEEP) (20896) LEASE, WELL NO. 2, ARCHER COUNTY REGULAR FIELD, ARCHER COUNTY, TEXAS**

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**FINAL ORDER**

The Commission finds that after statutory notice the captioned enforcement proceeding was heard by the examiner on November 15, 2007, and that the respondent, Rasher Energy, Inc. (693688), 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. Rasher Energy, Inc. (693688), ("Respondent") was given Notice of Hearing by certified mail, addressed to the most recent P-5 address on the Form P-5 Organization Report, which was not returned to the Commission.
2. The returned certified receipt containing the Original Complaint and the Notice of Hearing mailed to Respondent's most recent P-5 address was lost in the mail. The Post Office has no record of this item.
3. The returned certified receipt (green card) that was attached to the Original Complaint and the Notice of Hearing mailed to Respondents, President and Vice President, Lewis Jue, was signed and returned to the Commission on August 31, 2007. The certified receipt has been on file with the Commission for 15 days, exclusive of the day of receipt and day of issuance.
4. On December 11, 2006, Respondent, a Corporation, filed an Organization Report (Form P-5) with the Commission reporting that its officers consisted of the following individual(s): Lewis Jue; President and Vice-President.

5. Lewis Jue, 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.
6. The violations of Commission rules committed by respondent are related to safety and the control of pollution.
7. Respondent designated itself to the Commission as the operator of Well Nos. 1-4, 6, 8-12 and 16 on the Taylor -C- (14225) Lease and Well No. 2 on the Sterrett (Deep) (20896) Lease ("subject wells"/"subject leases") by filing a Form P-4 (Producer's Transportation Authority and Certificate of Compliance) with the Commission effective on November 2, 2005, for both of the subject leases.
8. According to Commission records the Respondent's Form P-5 (Organization Report) became delinquent on October 1, 2007. Respondent had a \$50,000.00 Letter of Credit as its financial assurance at the time of its last P-5 renewal.
9. Commission District office inspections were conducted on November 11, 2006 and June 7, 2007 for the Taylor -C- (14225) Lease. The signs or identification required to be posted at Well Nos. 2, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13 and 16 were missing.
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. Well Nos. 1, 3, 4, 6, 8-12 and 16 on the Taylor -C- (14225) Lease ceased production on or before March 31, 2003. Well No. 2 on the Taylor -C- (14225) Lease ceased injection on or before March 31, 2001.
12. Production from Well No. 2 on the Sterrett (Deep) (20896) Lease ceased on or before March 31, 2003.
13. The Statewide Rule 14(b)(2) plugging extensions for Well Nos. 1, 3, 4, 6, 8-12 and 16 on the Taylor -C- (14225) Lease were denied on December 20, 2005 because of operator filing problems.
14. The Statewide Rule 14(b)(2) plugging extension for Well No. 2 on the Taylor -C- (14225) Lease was denied on December 20, 2005 for failure to file an H-5.
15. The Statewide Rule 14(b)(2) plugging extension for Well No. 2 on the Sterrett (Deep) (20896) Lease was denied on November 18, 2006 for failure to submit and H-15.
16. 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 wells. Unplugged wellbores constitute a cognizable threat to the public health and safety because of the probability of pollution.
17. The total estimated cost to the State of plugging Well Nos. 1-4, 6, 8-12 and 16 on the Taylor -C- (14225) Lease is \$27,000.00.

18. The total estimated cost to the State of plugging Well No. 2 on the Sterrett (Deep) (20896) Lease is \$10,900.00.
19. A Commission District inspection was conducted on June 7, 2007 for the Taylor -C- (14225) Lease. There was an oil-stained area, approximately 12' x 16' x 3" deep around Well No. 12 filled with storm water. The inspector noted oil-stained vegetation and dark, oil-stained soil.
20. No permit has been issued to the Respondent for the discharge of oil and gas wastes on or from the subject lease.
21. The unpermitted discharges of oil and gas wastes or other substances or materials on the subject lease constitute a hazard to public health and safety because leaks and spills of oil and produced waters onto soils can migrate into surface water bodies causing contamination or can leach into the ground and percolate through soils into groundwater supplies.
22. A Commission District inspection was conducted on August 15, 2006 for the Sterrett (Deep) (20896) Lease. Well No. 2 had both tubing and casing open to the atmosphere.
23. Maintenance of surface control by wellhead assemblies is necessary to prevent the discharge of oil and gas wastes on the subject lease constituting a hazard to public health and safety because the discharges of oil and gas wastes onto land surface can migrate into surface or subsurface waters.
24. Commission records indicate no Form H-15 (Test On An Inactive Well More Than 25 Years Old) has been filed and approved for the Taylor -C- (14225) Lease, Well Nos. 1-4, 6, 8-12 and 16. Commission records further show that for the Taylor -C- (14225) Lease, Well No. 1, an H-15 test was due in May of 2007; for Well No. 3, an H-15 test was due in May 2007; for Well No. 4, an H-15 test was due in May of 2007; for Well No. 6, an H-15 test was due in May of 2007; for Well No. 8, it was completed on March 13, 1969, and an H-15 test was due in May of 2007; for Well No. 9, it was completed on May 26, 1969, and an H-15 test was due in May of 2007; for Well No. 10, it was completed on July 26, 1969, and an H-15 test was due in May of 2007; for Well No. 11, it was completed on February 15, 1974, and an H-15 test was due in May of 2007; for Well No. 12, it was completed on February 25, 1974, and an H-15 test was due in May of 2007; for Well No. 16, it was completed on August 15, 1974, and an H-15 test was due in May of 2007.
25. Commission records indicate no Form H-15 (Test On An Inactive Well More Than 25 Years Old) has been filed and approved for the Sterrett (Deep) (20896) Lease, Well No. 2. Commission records further show that the Sterrett (Deep) (20896) Lease, Well No. 2, was completed on January 11, 1981, and an H-15 test was due in May of 2006.
26. A Commission District inspection was conducted on June 7, 2007 for the Taylor -C- (14225) Lease. Respondent had not submitted to the Commission a successful H-5 (Disposal/Injection Well Pressure Test Report). The test was due on October 30, 2001.

27. The Respondent has not demonstrated good faith since it failed to timely plug or otherwise place the subject leases and subject wells in compliance after being notified of the violations by the District Office and failed to appear at the hearing to explain its inaction.

### **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, 8(d)(1), 13(b)(1)(B), 14(b)(2), 14(b)(3) and 46(j).
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 8(d)(1), which prohibits the discharge of oil and gas wastes without a permit.
6. Respondent is responsible for maintaining the subject lease in compliance with Statewide Rule 13(b)(1)(B), which requires that surface control of all wells be maintained with wellhead assemblies.
7. Respondent is responsible for maintaining the subject lease in compliance with Statewide Rule 14(b)(3), which requires that the operator of any well more than 25 years old that becomes inactive shall plug or test such well to determine whether the well poses a potential threat of harm to natural resources, including surface and subsurface water, oil and gas.
8. Respondent is responsible for maintaining the subject lease in compliance with Statewide Rule 46(j), which requires that the mechanical integrity of an injection well shall be evaluated by conducting pressure tests to determine whether the well, tubing, packer or casing have sufficient mechanical integrity.
9. Respondent is responsible for maintaining the subject leases and subject wells 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.
10. 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).

11. 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, Lewis Jue, 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. Rasher Energy, Inc. (693688), shall plug and or otherwise place the Taylor -C- (14225) Lease, Well Nos. 1-4, 6, 8-12 and 16, and the Sterrett (Deep) (20896) Lease, Well No. 2, Archer County Regular Field, Archer County, Texas in compliance with applicable Commission rules and regulations; and
2. Rasher Energy, Inc. (693688), shall pay to the Railroad Commission of Texas, for disposition as provided by law, an administrative penalty in the amount of **FIFTY THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS (\$50,750.00)**.

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 16<sup>th</sup> day of December 2008.

**RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS**

(Signatures affixed by Default Master Order dated December 16, 2008)

MH/sa