Environmental Protection Agency

seeking authorization to inject pursuant to § 146.15.

(70 FR 70532, Nov. 22, 2005)

Subpart C—Criteria and Standards Applicable to Class II Wells

§ 146.21 Applicability.

This subpart establishes criteria and standards for underground injection control programs to regulate Class II wells.

§ 146.22 Construction requirements.

(a) All new Class II wells shall be sited in such a fashion that they inject into a formation which is separated from any USDW by a confining zone that is free of known open faults or fractures within the area of review.

(b)(1) All Class II injection wells shall be cased and cemented to prevent movement of fluids into or between underground sources of drinking water. The casing and cement used in the construction of each newly drilled well shall be designed for the life expectancy of the well. In determining and specifying casing and cementing requirements, the following factors shall be considered:

(i) Depth to the injection zone;
(ii) Depth to the bottom of all USDWs; and
(iii) Estimated maximum and average injection pressures;

(2) In addition the Director may consider information on:

(i) Nature of formation fluids;
(ii) Lithology of injection and confining zones;
(iii) External pressure, internal pressure, and axial loading;
(iv) Hole size;
(v) Size and grade of all casing strings; and
(vi) Class of cement.

(c) The requirements in paragraph (b) of this section need not apply to newly drilled wells in existing fields if:

(1) They meet the requirements of the State for casing and cementing applicable to that field at the time of submission of the State program to the Administrator; and

(2) Well injection will not result in the movement of fluids into an underground source of drinking water so as to create a significant risk to the health of persons.

(d) The requirements in paragraph (b) of this section need not apply to newly drilled wells in existing fields if;

(1) They meet the requirements of the State for casing and cementing applicable to that field at the time of submission of the State program to the Administrator; and

(2) Well injection will not result in the movement of fluids into an underground source of drinking water so as to create a significant risk to the health of persons.

(e) Where a State did not have regulatory controls for casing and cementing prior to the time of the submission of the State program to the Administrator, the Director need not apply the casing and cementing requirements in paragraph (b) of this section if he submits as a part of his application for primacy, an appropriate plan for casing and cementing of existing, newly converted, and newly drilled wells in existing fields, and the Administrator approves the plan.

(f) Appropriate logs and other tests shall be conducted during the drilling and construction of new Class II wells. A descriptive report interpreting the results of that portion of those logs and tests which specifically relate to:

(1) an USDW and the confining zone adjacent to it; and

(2) the injection and adjacent formations shall be prepared by a knowledgeable log analyst and submitted to the director. At a minimum, these logs and tests shall include:

(1) Deviation checks on all holes constructed by first drilling a pilot hole and then enlarging the pilot hole, by reaming or another method. Such checks shall be at sufficiently frequent intervals to assure that vertical avenues for fluid movement in the form of diverging holes are not created during drilling.

(2) Such other logs and tests as may be needed after taking into account the availability of similar data in the area of the drilling site, the construction plan, and the need for additional information that may arise from time to time as the construction of the well progresses. In determining which logs
and tests shall be required the following shall be considered by the Director in setting logging and testing requirements:

(i) For surface casing intended to protect underground sources of drinking water in areas where the lithology has not been determined:

(A) Electric and caliper logs before casing is installed; and

(B) A cement bond, temperature, or density log after the casing is set and cemented.

(ii) for intermediate and long strings of casing intended to facilitate injection:

(A) Electric porosity and gamma ray logs before the casing is installed;

(B) Fracture finder logs; and

(C) A cement bond, temperature, or density log after the casing is set and cemented.

(g) At a minimum, the following information concerning the injection formation shall be determined or calculated for new Class II wells or projects:

(1) Fluid pressure;

(2) Estimated fracture pressure;

(3) Physical and chemical characteristics of the injection zone.


§ 146.23 Operating, monitoring, and reporting requirements.

(a) Operating requirements. Operating requirements shall, at a minimum, specify that:

(1) Injection pressure at the wellhead shall not exceed a maximum which shall be calculated so as to assure that the pressure during injection does not initiate new fractures or propagate existing fractures in the confining zone adjacent to the USDWs. In no case shall injection pressure cause the movement of injection or formation fluids into an underground source of drinking water.

(2) Injection between the outermost casing protecting underground sources of drinking water and the well bore shall be prohibited.

(b) Monitoring requirements. Monitoring requirements shall, at a minimum, include:

(1) Monitoring of the nature of injected fluids at time intervals sufficiently frequent to yield data representative of their characteristics;

(2) Observation of injection pressure, flow rate, and cumulative volume at least with the following frequencies:

(i) Weekly for produced fluid disposal operations;

(ii) Monthly for enhanced recovery operations;

(iii) Daily during the injection of liquid hydrocarbons and injection for withdrawal of stored hydrocarbons; and

(iv) Daily during the injection phase of cyclic steam operations

And recording of one observation of injection pressure, flow rate and cumulative volume at reasonable intervals no greater than 30 days.

(3) A demonstration of mechanical integrity pursuant to §146.8 at least once every five years during the life of the injection well;

(4) Maintenance of the results of all monitoring until the next permit review (see 40 CFR 144.52(a)(5)); and

(5) Hydrocarbon storage and enhanced recovery may be monitored on a field or project basis rather than on an individual well basis by manifold monitoring. Manifold monitoring may be used in cases of facilities consisting of more than one injection well, operating with a common manifold. Separate monitoring systems for each well are not required provided the owner/operator demonstrates that manifold monitoring is comparable to individual well monitoring.

(c) Reporting requirements. (1) Reporting requirements shall at a minimum include an annual report to the Director summarizing the results of monitoring required under paragraph (b) of this section. Such summary shall include monthly records of injected fluids, and any major changes in characteristics or sources of injected fluid. Previously submitted information may be included by reference.

(2) Owners or operators of hydrocarbon storage and enhanced recovery projects may report on a field or project basis rather than an individual
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§ 146.24 Information to be considered by the Director.

This section sets forth the information which must be considered by the Director in authorizing Class II wells. Certain maps, cross-sections, tabulations of wells within the area of review, and other data may be included in the application by reference provided they are current, readily available to the Director (for example, in the permitting agency’s files) and sufficiently identified to be retrieved. In cases where EPA issues the permit, all the information in this section is to be submitted to the Administrator.

(a) Prior to the issuance of a permit for an existing Class II well to operate or the construction or conversion of a new Class II well the Director shall consider the following:

(1) Information required in 40 CFR 144.31 and 144.31(g);

(2) A map showing the injection well or project area for which a permit is sought and the applicable area of review. Within the area of review, the map must show the number or name and location of all existing producing wells, injection wells, abandoned wells, dry holes, and water wells. The map may also show surface bodies of waters, mines (surface and subsurface), quarries and other pertinent surface features including residences and roads, and faults if known or suspended. Only information of public record and pertinent information known to the applicant is required to be included on this map. This requirement does not apply to existing Class II wells; and

(3) A tabulation of data reasonably available from public records or otherwise known to the applicant on all wells within the area of review included on the map required under paragraph (a)(2) of this section which penetrate the proposed injection zone or, in the case of Class II wells operating over the fracture pressure of the injection formation, all known wells within the area of review which penetrate formations affected by the increase in pressure. Such data shall include a description of each well’s type, construction, date drilled, location, depth, record of plugging and complete, and any additional information the Director may require. In cases where the information would be repetitive and the wells are of similar age, type, and construction the Director may elect to only require data on a representative number of wells. This requirement does not apply to existing Class II wells.

(b) In addition the Director may consider the following:

(1) Proposed formation testing program to obtain the information required by §146.22(g);

(2) Proposed stimulation program;

(3) Proposed injection procedure;

(4) Proposed contingency plans, if any, to cope with well failures so as to prevent migration of contaminating fluids into an underground source of drinking water;

(5) Appropriate geological data on the injection zone and confining zone including lithologic description, geological name, thickness and depth;

(6) Geologic name and depth to bottom of all underground sources of drinking water which may be affected by the injection;

(7) Schematic or other appropriate drawings of the surface and subsurface construction details of the well;

(8) In the case of new injection wells the corrective action proposed to be taken by the applicant under 40 CFR 122.44;

(9) A certificate that the applicant has assured through a performance bond or other appropriate means, the resources necessary to close plug or abandon the well as required by 40 CFR 122.42(g);

(b) In addition the Director may consider the following:

(1) Proposed formation testing program to obtain the information required by §146.22(g);

(2) Proposed stimulation program;

(3) Proposed injection procedure;

(4) Proposed contingency plans, if any, to cope with well failures so as to prevent migration of contaminating fluids into an underground source of drinking water;
(5) Plans for meeting the monitoring requirements of §146.23(b).

(c) Prior to granting approval for the operation of a Class II well the Director shall consider the following information:

(1) All available logging and testing program data on the well;
(2) A demonstration of mechanical integrity pursuant to §146.8;
(3) The anticipated maximum pressure and flow rate at which the permittee will operate.
(4) The results of the formation testing program;
(5) The actual injection procedure; and
(6) For new wells the status of corrective action on defective wells in the area of review.

(d) Prior to granting approval for the plugging and abandonment of a Class II well the Director shall consider the following information:

(1) The type, and number of plugs to be used;
(2) The placement of each plug including the elevation of top and bottom;
(3) The type, grade, and quantity of cement to be used;
(4) The method of placement of the plugs; and
(5) The procedure to be used to meet the requirements of §146.10(c).


§ 146.31 Applicability.
This subpart establishes criteria and standards for underground injection control programs to regulate Class III wells.

§ 146.32 Construction requirements.
(a) All new Class III wells shall be cased and cemented to prevent the migration of fluids into or between underground sources of drinking water. The Director may waive the cementing requirement for new wells in existing projects or portions of existing projects where he has substantial evidence that no contamination of underground sources of drinking water would result. The casing and cement used in the construction of each newly drilled well shall be designed for the life expectancy of the well. In determining and specifying casing and cementing requirements, the following factors shall be considered:

(1) Depth to the injection zone;
(2) Injection pressure, external pressure, internal pressure, axial loading, etc.;
(3) Hole size;
(4) Size and grade of all casing strings (wall thickness, diameter, nominal weight, length, joint specification, and construction material);
(5) Corrosiveness of injected fluids and formation fluids;
(6) Lithology of injection and confining zones; and
(7) Type and grade of cement.

(b) Appropriate logs and other tests shall be conducted during the drilling and construction of new Class III wells. A descriptive report interpreting the results of such logs and tests shall be prepared by a knowledgeable log analyst and submitted to the Director. The logs and tests appropriate to each type of Class III well shall be determined based on the intended function, depth, construction and other characteristics of the well, availability of similar data in the area of the drilling site and the need for additional information that may arise from time to time as the construction of the well progresses. Deviation checks shall be conducted on all holes where pilot holes and reaming are used, unless the hole will be cased and cemented by circulating cement to the surface. Where deviation checks are necessary they shall be conducted at sufficiently frequent intervals to assure that vertical avenues for fluid migration in the form of diverging holes are not created during drillings.

(c) Where the injection zone is a formation which is naturally water-bearing the following information concerning the injection zone shall be determined or calculated for new Class III wells or projects:

(1) Fluid pressure;
(2) Fracture pressure; and