



Ohio Revised Code

Section 1509.072 Duty to restore disturbed land surface.

Effective: September 29, 2011

Legislation: House Bill 153 - 129th General Assembly

No oil or gas well owner or agent of an oil or gas well owner shall fail to restore the land surface within the area disturbed in siting, drilling, completing, and producing the well as required in this section.

(A) Within fourteen days after the date upon which the drilling of a well is completed to total depth in an urbanized area and within two months after the date upon which the drilling of a well is completed in all other areas, the owner or the owner's agent, in accordance with the restoration plan filed under division (A)(10) of section 1509.06 of the Revised Code, shall fill all the pits for containing brine and other waste substances resulting, obtained, or produced in connection with exploration or drilling for oil or gas that are not required by other state or federal law or regulation, and remove all drilling supplies and drilling equipment. Unless the chief of the division of oil and gas resources management approves a longer time period, within three months after the date upon which the surface drilling of a well is commenced in an urbanized area and within six months after the date upon which the surface drilling of a well is commenced in all other areas, the owner or the owner's agent shall grade or terrace and plant, seed, or sod the area disturbed that is not required in production of the well where necessary to bind the soil and prevent substantial erosion and sedimentation. If the chief finds that a pit used for containing brine, other waste substances, or oil is in violation of section 1509.22 of the Revised Code or rules adopted or orders issued under it, the chief may require the pit to be emptied and closed before expiration of the fourteen-day or three-month restoration period.

(B) Within three months after a well that has produced oil or gas is plugged in an urbanized area and within six months after a well that has produced oil or gas is plugged in all other areas, or after the plugging of a dry hole, unless the chief approves a longer time period, the owner or the owner's agent shall remove all production and storage structures, supplies, and equipment, and any oil, salt water, and debris, and fill any remaining excavations. Within that period the owner or the owner's agent shall grade or terrace and plant, seed, or sod the area disturbed where necessary to bind the soil and prevent substantial erosion and sedimentation.



The owner shall be released from responsibility to perform any or all restoration requirements of this section on any part or all of the area disturbed upon the filing of a request for a waiver with and obtaining the written approval of the chief, which request shall be signed by the surface owner to certify the approval of the surface owner of the release sought. The chief shall approve the request unless the chief finds upon inspection that the waiver would be likely to result in substantial damage to adjoining property, substantial contamination of surface or underground water, or substantial erosion or sedimentation.

The chief, by order, may shorten the time periods provided for under division (A) or (B) of this section if failure to shorten the periods would be likely to result in damage to public health or the waters or natural resources of the state.

The chief, upon written application by an owner or an owner's agent showing reasonable cause, may extend the period within which restoration shall be completed under divisions (A) and (B) of this section, but not to exceed a further six-month period, except under extraordinarily adverse weather conditions or when essential equipment, fuel, or labor is unavailable to the owner or the owner's agent.

If the chief refuses to approve a request for waiver or extension, the chief shall do so by order.