

Subpart C—Pollution Prevention and Control

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§250.300 Pollution prevention.

(a) During the exploration, development, production, and transportation of oil and gas or sulphur, the lessee shall take measures to prevent unauthorized discharge of pollutants into the offshore waters. The lessee shall not create conditions that will pose unreasonable risk to public health, life, property, aquatic life, wildlife, recreation, navigation, commercial fishing, or other uses of the ocean.

(1) When pollution occurs as a result of operations conducted by or on behalf of the lessee and the pollution damages or threatens to damage life (including fish and other aquatic life), property, any mineral deposits (in areas leased or not leased), or the marine, coastal, or human environment, the control and removal of the pollution to the satisfaction of the District Manager shall be at the expense of the lessee. Immediate corrective action shall be taken in all cases where pollution has occurred. Corrective action shall be subject to modification when directed by the District Manager.

(2) If the lessee fails to control and remove the pollution, the Director, in cooperation with other appropriate Agencies of Federal, State, and local governments, or in cooperation with the lessee, or both, shall have the right to control and remove the pollution at the lessee's expense. Such action shall not relieve the lessee of any responsibility provided for by law.

(b)(1) The District Manager may restrict the rate of drilling fluid discharges or prescribe alternative discharge methods. The District Manager may also restrict the use of components that could cause unreasonable degradation to the marine environment. No petroleum-based substances, including diesel fuel, may be added to the drilling mud system without prior approval of the District Manager. For Arctic OCS exploratory drilling, you must capture all petroleum-based mud to prevent its discharge into the marine environment. The Regional Supervisor may also require you to capture, during your Arctic OCS exploratory drilling operations, all water-based mud from operations after completion of the hole for the conductor casing to prevent its discharge into the marine environment, based on various factors including, but not limited to:

(i) The proximity of your exploratory drilling operation to subsistence hunting and fishing locations;

(ii) The extent to which discharged mud may cause marine mammals to alter their migratory patterns in a manner that impedes subsistence users' access to, or use of, those resources, or increases the risk of injury to subsistence users; or

(iii) The extent to which discharged mud may adversely affect marine mammals, fish, or their habitat.

(2) You must obtain approval from the District Manager of the method you plan to use to dispose of drill cuttings, sand, and other well solids. For Arctic OCS exploratory drilling, you must capture all cuttings from operations that utilize petroleum-based mud to prevent their discharge into the marine environment. The Regional Supervisor may also require you to capture, during your Arctic OCS exploratory drilling operations, all cuttings from operations that utilize water-based mud after completion of the hole for the conductor casing to prevent their discharge into the marine environment, based on various factors including, but not limited to:

(i) The proximity of your exploratory drilling operation to subsistence hunting and fishing locations;

(ii) The extent to which discharged cuttings may cause marine mammals to alter their migratory patterns in a manner that impedes subsistence users' access to, or use of, those resources, or increases the risk of injury to subsistence users; or

(iii) The extent to which discharged cuttings may adversely affect marine mammals, fish, or their habitat.

(3) All hydrocarbon-handling equipment for testing and production such as separators, tanks, and treaters shall be designed, installed, and operated to prevent pollution. Maintenance or repairs which are necessary to prevent pollution of offshore waters shall be undertaken immediately.

(4) Curbs, gutters, drip pans, and drains shall be installed in deck areas in a manner necessary to collect all contaminants not authorized for discharge. Oil drainage shall be piped to a properly designed, operated, and maintained sump system which will automatically maintain the oil at a level sufficient to prevent discharge of oil into offshore waters. All gravity drains shall be equipped with a water trap or other means to prevent gas in the sump system from escaping through the drains. Sump piles shall not be used as processing devices to treat or skim liquids but may be used to collect treated-produced water, treated-produced sand, or liquids from drip pans and deck drains and as a final trap for hydrocarbon liquids in the event of equipment upsets. Improperly designed, operated, or maintained sump piles which do not prevent the discharge of oil into offshore waters shall be replaced or repaired.

(5) On artificial islands, all vessels containing hydrocarbons shall be placed inside an impervious berm or otherwise protected to contain spills. Drainage shall be directed away from the drilling rig to a sump. Drains and sumps shall be constructed to prevent seepage.

(6) Disposal of equipment, cables, chains, containers, or other materials into offshore waters is prohibited.

(c) Materials, equipment, tools, containers, and other items used in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) which are of such shape or configuration that they are likely to snag or damage fishing devices shall be handled and marked as follows:

(1) All loose material, small tools, and other small objects shall be kept in a suitable storage area or a marked container when not in use and in a marked container before transport over offshore waters;

(2) All cable, chain, or wire segments shall be recovered after use and securely stored until suitable disposal is accomplished;

(3) Skid-mounted equipment, portable containers, spools or reels, and drums shall be marked with the owner's name prior to use or transport over offshore waters; and

(4) All markings must clearly identify the owner and must be durable enough to resist the effects of the environmental conditions to which they may be exposed.

(d) Any of the items described in paragraph (c) of this section that are lost overboard shall be recorded on the facility's daily operations report, as appropriate, and reported to the District Manager.

[76 FR 64462, Oct. 18, 2011, as amended at 81 FR 46560, July 15, 2016]

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§250.301 Inspection of facilities.

Drilling and production facilities shall be inspected daily or at intervals approved or prescribed by the District Manager to determine if pollution is occurring. Necessary maintenance or repairs shall be made immediately. Records of such inspections and repairs shall be maintained at the facility or at a nearby manned facility for 2 years.