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GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
OFFICE OF CONSERVATION
OFFICE OF CONSERVATION
ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION

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SECRETARY

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COMMISSIONER OF CONSERVATION

INTRA-OFFICE GUIDANCE STATEMENT

GUIDANCE NO.: ENV-GS-06

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 20, 2010

SUBJECT: Procedure to report the observance of naturally occurring methane or natural gas during water well construction.

PURPOSE: Provides clarification as to the necessity and procedure for reporting any observable evidence of the presence of naturally occurring methane or natural gas during water well, geotechnical borehole or ground water monitoring well construction.

GUIDANCE: Louisiana Revised Statute 38:3098 et seq. and LAC Title 56 require contractors drilling water well, geotechnical borehole or ground water monitoring wells to, among other things, record any unusual occurrences, such as loss of circulation, cave-ins, etc., as well as, take all measures necessary to minimize health and safety hazards. Additionally, those statutes require this office to collect, catalog and store water well construction and drilling data.

It is known that the presence of naturally occurring methane or natural gas exists in ground water of certain aquifers of the State; namely in the Chicot aquifer in the Lake Charles area of Calcasieu Parish; and in the Sparta aquifer in Southeast Union Parish.

Considering the above statutory mandates and the potential safety hazards associated with the uncontrolled release of naturally occurring methane or natural gas, all licensed drillers and contractors encountering or having knowledge of any situation where observable evidence, such as bubbling drilling mud or gas venting at the well bore or other nearby surface location or feature, indicating the possible presence of naturally occurring methane, natural gas or a similar subsurface gas pressure release shall report such an event verbally to the Environmental Division of the Office of Conservation within twenty-four (24) hours.

APPROVED BY:

Gary W. Snellgrove, Director
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APPROVED BY:

James H. Welsh
Commissioner of Conservation