

Arrangements for drilling notifications and enforcement at onshore borehole sites

Open Government status

Open

Target audience

Inspectors in CEMHD1, CEMHD2, CHEMHD3, ED5, ED6.1, ED6.3 and ED6.4

Summary

This circular gives details of the arrangements for the notification to HSE of the intention to drill boreholes at onshore sites under the [Borehole Sites and Borehole Operations Regulations 1995 \(BSOR\)](#), and the enforcement of statutory provisions at such sites. This guidance replaces SPC//TECH/SI1/04 which is now withdrawn.

Introduction

BSOR apply to:

- the extraction of minerals by a borehole
- prospecting with a view to such extraction and
- prospecting by a surface borehole with a view to the extraction of minerals by means other than a borehole. e.g. underground mining, quarrying etc.

The regulations deal, inter-alia, with the requirements for the pre-notification to HSE of an operator's intention to drill at petroleum and mining borehole sites. They also require the notification of boreholes to a depth of 30m or more in a defined mining area.

Further notification requirements are imposed by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).

Action

Well operators should send notifications required by BSOR Regulation 6(1) for the commencement of drilling operations for petroleum (oil & gas) via the CAP Portal https://itportal.beis.gov.uk/eng/fox/cap/CAP_LOGIN/login. If the well operator does not have access to the portal, or is unable to submit a notification via the portal, then

it should be emailed to well.ops.hid@hse.gov.uk. Further information on use of the CAP Portal is available at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/osdr/guidance/well-notifications-cap-industry-guidance-20.pdf>

If the site involves the extraction of gas in a mining area a copy of the notification should also be sent to HM Inspectorate of Mines, Foundry House, 3 Millsands, Riverside Exchange, Sheffield, S3 8NH.

Notifications required by Regulation 6(2) and (3) for the commencement of drilling operations for mineral extraction by underground mining, or a borehole deeper than 30m in a mining area should be sent to HM Inspectorate of Mines, Foundry House, 3 Millsands, Riverside Exchange, Sheffield, S3 8NH.

Notifications required by Regulation 6(3) for the commencement of drilling operations for mineral extraction by quarrying should be sent to HSE, ED6.4 (Quarries Inspectorate), Phase 1 Government Buildings, Ty Glas, Llanishen, Cardiff, CF14 5SH. Where any borehole is likely to be or exceed a depth of 30m in a mining area, a copy of the notification should also be sent to HM Inspectorate of Mines.

Notifications required by Regulation 6(4) or 6(5) should be sent to the same primary address as the original 6(1), 6(2), 6(3) notifications.

Background

BSOR notifications allow HSE an opportunity to inspect operator plans prior to the commencement of operations, and allow for enforcement action to be taken to prevent harm. It is imperative that notifications are handled appropriately during the notification window to ensure that timely action, where required, can be taken.

Organisation

ED6.1 Mines Inspectorate has the lead for prospect drilling for minerals, other than oil and gas, where extraction will be by underground mining.

ED6.3 Well Engineering & Operations has the lead at sites where prospect drilling for or extraction of oil and gas is undertaken, whether or not there is preliminary treatment of the oil and gas; e.g. dewatering and degassing, coal bed methane extraction, and methane extraction from old mine workings.

ED6.4 Quarries has the lead for borehole operations prospecting for minerals, including coal, where extraction will be by quarrying

CEMHD1, 2, 3 and ED5 have the operational lead for boreholes prospecting for, or extracting, brine within their respective geographical areas. However, where it is for the purpose of creating a natural gas storage cavity, lead responsibility should go to ED5.