

**The NewsRoom**

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**Implementation of Plans and Information Delayed in Wake of Hurricane Katrina**

WASHINGTON- In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the Minerals Management Service is [delaying until January 1, 2006, the effective date of a rule](#) (52 KB PDF file) that regulates plans and information that lessees and operators must submit in connection with oil and gas exploration, development and production in the Outer Continental Shelf.

The final rule on plans and information, published in the [Federal Register on August 30](#) (462 KB PDF file) and originally slated to become effective today requires MMS to publish a [Notice to Lessees \(NTL\)](#) to provide further guidance. The primary office responsible for developing those procedures, the MMS Gulf of Mexico Regional Office in New Orleans, Louisiana, has been closed since Hurricane Katrina hit on August 29, 2005. The delay in implementation will provide relief to the government and the oil and gas industry as they recover from this disaster.

MMS, part of the U.S. Department of the Interior, oversees 1.76 billion acres of the Outer Continental Shelf, managing offshore energy and minerals while protecting the human, marine, and coastal environments. The OCS provides 29 percent of oil and 19 percent of natural gas produced domestically, as well as sand used for coastal restoration. MMS collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from Federal and American Indian lands, and contributes to the Land and Water Conservation Fund and other special use funds, with Fiscal Year 2004 disbursements of about \$8 billion and more than \$143 billion since 1982.

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