

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE
GULF OF MEXICO OCS REGION**

90-09

November 8, 1990

**NOTICE TO LESSEES AND OPERATORS OF FEDERAL OIL AND GAS LEASES
IN THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF, GULF OF MEXICO OCS REGION**

**Temporary Abandonment of Wells and Maintenance,
Protection and Removal of Underwater Casing Stubs**

This Notice to Lessees and Operators (NTL) modifies the provisions of NTL 85-8 and is provided pursuant to the authority prescribed in 30 CFR 250.4(b). The NTL 85-8 (effective November 26, 1985), required that casing stubs of wells maintained as temporarily abandoned in water depths *less than 100 feet* be protected and, that the stub also be marked with a buoy installed in accordance with United States Coast Guard (USCG) Regulations. The NTL 85-8 also identified, as an acceptable temporary abandonment alternative, the use of mud line suspension equipment or equivalent in such a manner that the equipment does not present an obstruction at the mud line.

When necessary for the proper development and production of a lease, a well may be temporarily abandoned in accordance with the requirements of 30 CFR 250.113, effective May 31, 1988. However, in order to maintain a well with a casing stub in the temporarily abandoned status, the lessee shall provide, within one year of the original temporary abandonment and at successive 1-year intervals thereafter, an annual report to the regional office describing plans for reentry to complete or permanently abandon the well. Effective the date hereof, mud line suspension equipment must be installed on wells temporarily abandoned in water depths to *300 feet* or casing stubs, no higher than 10 feet above the mud line, must be installed and protected by a dome at the time of temporary abandonment. All existing unprotected casing stubs remaining in water depths to *300 feet* must now be removed or protected in this manner within 1 year after the effective date hereof.

All such locations must be inspected annually to assure that the dome is in place. The results of this inspection should be included in the above-mentioned annual report, including the method and date of inspection and status of the protective device, which must be properly maintained on site so as not to present an obstruction to trawling operations. Unless the lease operator can substantiate that continued maintenance of a well in the temporarily abandoned status is necessary in the interest of proper development and exploration of the lease, prompt permanent abandonment of the well, removal of the casing stub and any existing protective dome, and clearance of the site shall be accomplished in accordance with the requirements of 30 CFR 250.112, 30 CFR 250.113, 30 CFR 250.114 (effective May 31, 1988) and NTL 90-03.

Approval to install a caisson or jacket must be obtained from the Regional Supervisor, Field Operations. All caissons or jackets installed shall be equipped with the proper aids to navigation in accordance with USCG Regulations. Approval to install a protective dome or use mud line suspension equipment must be obtained from the appropriate District Supervisor.

[Signed] D. J. Bourgeois
Regional Supervisor
Field Operations