

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

NTL No. 99-G21

Effective Date: September 13, 1999

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

Platform Removal Applications

This Notice to Lessees and Operators (NTL) supersedes the Letter to Lessees and Operators dated December 9, 1986, on this subject. It provides a regulatory citation, makes minor technical amendments, and includes a statement on the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

Background

According to 30 CFR 250.913(a), you must obtain approval from the Minerals Management Service (MMS) of the methods you will use to remove OCS structures. You must obtain this approval before you may proceed with removal operations.

The use of explosives to remove platforms in the Gulf of Mexico could have an adverse impact on threatened and endangered sea turtles protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). In fact, these explosions have the potential to injure or kill these sea turtles, depending on the strength of the blast and proximity of the animals. Accordingly, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issued recommendations and regulations regarding the use of explosives to remove OCS platforms. To comply with these ESA requirements, the MMS must consider the nature of each platform removal, determine the potential impacts to the threatened or endangered species, and develop mitigating measures to protect the threatened or endangered species.

Contents of Platform/Structural Removal Applications

To facilitate the review of your OCS platform/structure removal application by the Gulf of Mexico OCS Region (GOMR) and ensure compliance with ESA requirements, you must provide the information listed below with each proposal.

I. Responsible Party

- A. Lease operator name.
- B. Address.
- C. Contact person and telephone number.

D. Shore base.

II. Identification of Structure to be Removed

- A. Platform name/Complex ID number.
- B. Location (lease, area, block, and block coordinates).
- C. Year installed.
- D. Proposed date of removal (month/year).
- E. Water depth.

III. Description of Structure to be Removed

- A. Configuration (attach a photograph or a diagram).
- B. Size.
- C. Number of legs/casings/pilings.
- D. Diameter and wall thickness of legs/casings/pilings.
- E. Are piles grouted? Inside or outside?
- F. Brief description of soil composition and condition.

IV. Purpose

- A. Lease expiration date.
- B. Reason for removing the structure.

V. Removal Method

- A. Brief description of the method you will use.
- B. If explosives are to be used, provide the following:
 - 1. Kind of explosives.
 - 2. Number and sizes of charges.
 - a. Single shot or multiple shots?
 - b. If multiple shots, sequence and timing of detonations.
 - 3. Bulk or shaped charge?
 - a. Depth of detonation below mudline.
 - b. Inside or outside pilings?
- C. If you will use divers or acoustic devices to conduct a pre-removal survey to detect the presence of turtles and marine mammals, briefly describe the proposed detection method.

- D. Post-removal monitoring techniques.
1. Will you use transducers to measure the pressure and impulse of the detonations?
 2. Will you use divers to survey the area after structure removal to determine any effects on marine life?

VI. Biological Information

- A. Provide the results, if available, of any recent biological surveys conducted in the vicinity of the structure.
- B. Describe any recent observations, if available, of turtles or marine mammals at the structure site.

Number of Copies and Submission Address

You must submit three (3) copies of a platform removal application proposing the use of explosives and two (2) copies of a platform removal application not proposing the use of explosives to:

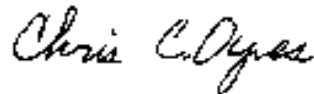
Minerals Management Service, GOMR
Regional Supervisor, Field Operations
Office of Structural and Technical Support (MS 5210)
1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard
New Orleans, Louisiana 70123

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

The information collection provisions of this NTL are intended to provide clarification, description, or interpretation of requirements contained in 30 CFR 250, Subpart I. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the information collection requirements for these regulations and assigned OMB Control Number 1010-0058. This NTL does not impose additional information collection requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

Contact

If you have any questions on this NTL, you may contact Mr. Arvind Shah at (504) 736-2894.



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Regional Director