Chapter 3: Operational Rules, Drilling Rules

Section 39. Authorization for Flaring and Venting of Gas

(a) The Commission encourages the Owner or Operator to employ practical technologies that minimize the venting and flaring of gas, and shall be conducted in compliance with Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality Air Quality Rules. Flaring or venting authorized under this section shall be reported monthly on a form prescribed by the Supervisor, describing the following:

(i) Duration and total estimated volume of gas;

(ii) Circumstances that resulted in flared or vented gas;

(iii) Identification of whether gas was vented or flared;

(iv) Identification of whether the gas volume is based on metered flow, Gas/Oil Ratio (GOR) from a collected sample, or other measurement method approved by the Supervisor. If the GOR method is used, a crude oil analysis at reservoir conditions must be completed and submitted to the Commission, unless flared gas is from a known field and production horizon. The crude oil analysis shall be submitted within six (6) months, and every five (5) years thereafter.

(v) Owners/Operators with wells venting or flaring shall submit a compositional analysis of the gas (including hydrogen sulfide):

(A) Within six (6) months and every five (5) years thereafter for existing and new wells venting or flaring under section (b)(iv);

(B) Within three (3) months of authorization for wells flaring under section (c).

(b) Venting or flaring under the following circumstances does not constitute waste and is authorized by the Commission:

(i) Emergencies or upset conditions, and for safety purposes during necessary maintenance or upgrades. During temporary emergency situations, such as compressor or other equipment failures, relief of abnormal system pressures, or other conditions which result in the unavoidable short-term venting or flaring of gas at a lease, gas plant or other facility;

(ii) Well purging and evaluation tests: During the unloading or cleaning up of a well during routine purging or drill stem, producing, or evaluation tests;

(iii) Production tests: During initial or recompletion evaluation tests not exceeding a period of fifteen (15) days, unless a longer test period is authorized by the Supervisor;

(iv) Low rate casing head gas. Unless it is determined by the Supervisor or the Commission that waste is occurring:

(A) Up to sixty (60) MCF of gas per day is authorized to be flared from individual oil wells.

(B) Venting of casing head gas can occur when the rate is below twenty (20) MCF of gas per day.

(C) Venting or flaring is authorized either at the well or at a lease facility which serves several wells. Venting cannot exceed twenty (20) MCF per day at lease facility.

(c) Application (Authority) to Flare. Unless flaring is authorized under subsection

(b) of this section, an Owner/Operator shall apply for authority to flare. Flaring approved under this section does not constitute waste and is authorized by the Commission.

(i) The Supervisor may administratively grant authorization to flare for periods beyond the 15 day production test up to 180 days for volumes up to an average of 250 MCF/d (on a monthly average) not to exceed a total of 45 MMCF. Commission approval is required for authorization to flare in excess of 45 MMCF or 180 days.

(ii) An application to flare shall contain the following information:

(A) A statement of reason for flaring;

(B) The estimated duration of flaring;

(C) The estimated daily volume of gas in thousands of standard cubic feet per day (MCF/d);

(D) The estimated daily volume and type of associated produced fluids, gas or plant products in barrels, MCFs, gallons or tons per day, as applicable;

(E) A legal description of the well(s), plant or facility and distance to the nearest potential sales point or pipeline(s);

(F) A description of applicable safety factors and plans such as use of a constant flare igniter, facility pressure release, or emergency protection practices.

(G) For wells subject to Chapter 3, Section 47 (setbacks), a plan to address authorized flaring in the approved mitigation plan.

(H) A gas capture plan that includes:

(I) A description and map of offsetting wells, gas gathering, transportation and treatment facilities that are present in the area;

(II) The name of the gas gatherer(s) providing gas take- away capacity;

(III) Information on the gas gathering line to which an Operator proposes to connect to including:

(1.) Anticipated date of availability of the gas gathering line;

(2.) Design capacity and capacity demand at the time of application;

(3.) Downstream gas processing plant capacity and capacity demand at time application;

(4.) Alternatives to flaring for period between first sales and connection to gas gathering line.

(iii) Upon completion of flaring authorized by the Supervisor and/or Commission, the operator shall submit a final report detailing total volumes, duration, and average daily volume flared to the Supervisor.

(d) All operations shall be conducted in a safe and workmanlike manner. If the gas stream is sour or venting would present a safety hazard, a constant flare igniter system or other Commission approved method to safely manage sour gas may be required.

(e) Venting of gas containing a hydrogen sulfide content in excess of 50 PPM is not allowed. Venting does not include emissions associated with fugitive losses from valves, fittings, surface piping, pneumatic devices, and other production equipment, including the wellhead. However, the Commission believes these should be operating safely, effectively and efficiently. Supervisor approval is required for venting of gas containing a hydrogen sulfide content in excess of 50 PPM for specific job tasks in controlled environments, such as well repairs, pipeline purging, well failures, decommissioning of facilities, etc., or where necessary as a safety measure where flaring would be dangerous due to the introduction of an ignition source at the work site or when the operation is conducted under the authority and regulations of the Department of Environmental Quality.