

Inspections of Suspended Facilities and Wells

May 2017

With the decrease in crude oil and gas prices, there has been an increase in inactive and suspended facilities, wells, and pipelines. We are concerned about the risks posed by this increase and are therefore conducting more inspections in 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 of facilities, wells, and pipelines that have been suspended or are otherwise inactive.

This document, which will be updated twice a year, reports on inspections of suspended facilities and wells. Inspections of suspended pipelines are reported separately.

Of 3253 suspended facility and well inspections between April 1, 2016, and March 31, 2017, 817 found at least one noncompliance (25.1%). The top ten most common noncompliances are indicated in the table below.

Noncompliance	Number of occurrences
Well/facility not maintained in a clean condition. [OGCR, s. 8.150(4)]	186
Aboveground/underground tank out of service does not meet the requirements. [OGCR, s. 8.030(2); Directive 055, s. 12]	155
All wellhead valves are not chained and locked or valve handles not removed. [Directive 013, table 1]	153
Improper/inadequate identification sign. [OGCR, s. 6.020(3), (5), (7)]	85
Conspicuous identification sign not posted at the primary entrance to the well or facility. [OGCR, s. 6.020(3); Directive 055, s. 3.8]	80
All outlets (except surface casing vents) not bull plugged or blind flanged with needle valves. [Directive 013, table 1]	79
No or improper warning symbol posted. [OGCR, s. 6.020(8)–(13), Schedule 12]	60
Waste material, debris, refuse, or garbage accumulating on site [PLA, s. 54(1)(a); PLAR, s. 21(1)(h)]	58
Failure to ensure that a call to the licensee 24-hour emergency telephone number initiates immediate action. [Directive 071, s. 2.1(3)]	54
No or inadequate surface casing vent. [OGCR, ss. 6.100, 7.050(3)]	44

The following are some of the items that the AER will be focusing on during its inspections in 2017/2018:

- withdrawal of storage tanks from service (*Directive 055*, section 12)
- signage (*OGCR*, section 6.020)
- housekeeping (*OGCR*, section 8.150(4))

- security (*OGCR*, sections 8.170, 8.171, and 8.180)
- specific conditions of approvals and dispositions (*EPEA*, *WA*, and *PLA*)
- wells that have been inactive for more than 12 months (*Directive 013*, Inactive Well Compliance Program)

For any questions related to inspections of suspended facilities and wells, contact your local AER field centre. Contact information is available on the AER website under About AER > [Contact Us](#).