

1 Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division  
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8 **STATE OF CALIFORNIA**  
9 **NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY**  
10 **DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION**  
11 **GEOLOGIC ENERGY MANAGEMENT DIVISION**  
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14 **ORDER TO PAY A CIVIL PENALTY AND PERFORM REMEDIAL WORK**  
15 **NO. 1488**  
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18 **Operator: West Energy Operating, LLC (11109)**

19 **Field Name: Bellevue**

20 **County: Kern**  
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1 I. Introduction

2 The State Oil and Gas Supervisor (**Supervisor**), acting through the Geologic Energy  
3 Management Division (**CalGEM**), and under the authority of Division 3 of the Public Resources  
4 Code (**PRC**; commencing with PRC section 3000) and title 14 of the California Code of  
5 Regulations (**Regulations**), may impose a civil penalty on a person who violates any statutory  
6 provision of the PRC, or any regulation that implements those statutory provisions. (PRC, §  
7 3236.5.)

8 Based on CalGEM's records, West Energy Operating, LLC (**Operator**) is the "operator"  
9 (as defined in PRC, § 3009) and is responsible for the Well identified on **Attachment A**,  
10 incorporated herein (the "**Well**"). As described in more detail below, Operator has not  
11 maintained compliance with applicable requirements for operation of the Well. Operator's  
12 failure to comply with the Regulations poses a potential threat to life, health, property, and  
13 natural resources and constitutes a violation requiring remedial work and for which the  
14 Supervisor has determined imposition of a civil penalty is appropriate. Therefore, pursuant to  
15 PRC sections 3106, 3224, 3225, 3226, 3236.5, and 3270 and Regulations section 1777, the  
16 Supervisor is ordering Operator to (1) perform remedial work to bring the Well into compliance  
17 and (2) pay an administrative civil penalty for the violation.

18 **Attachment B**, incorporated herein, contains a list of definitions and authorities that are  
19 applicable to this Order.

20 **Alleged Acts and Omissions**

21 Based on CalGEM's records, at all times relevant to this Order, Operator was the  
22 operator, as defined in PRC section 3009, of the Well. On or about April 8, 2024, CalGEM  
23 conducted an inspection of the Well where the violation described below was observed and  
24 documented in the Bellevue Field. (**Attachment C**, incorporated herein.)

25 CalGEM records reflect Operator has not maintained compliance with applicable  
26 requirements for operation of the Well. Operator's lack of adherence to the Regulations poses  
27 a potential threat to life, health, property, and natural resources. The violation at issue is  
28 identified below.

**A. Failure to Keep Well Cellar Drained (Regulations, § 1777, subd. (c)(3).)**

The well cellar is an excavated area around the wellhead that provides space for equipment at the top of the wellbore. Operators are required to keep well cellars drained. (Regulations, § 1777, subd. (c)(3).)

During the inspection, CalGEM observed fluids in the well cellar, in violation of Regulations, section 1777, subd. (c)(3), at the following well:

API	Well Designation
0402904224	Houghton 28-35

As of the date of this Order, CalGEM does not have any records from Operator demonstrating that the violation has been corrected.

**Civil Penalty/Remedial Work**

**A. Civil Penalty**

Based on the foregoing Alleged Acts and Omissions and pursuant to PRC section 3236.5, by this Order the Supervisor imposes on Operator an administrative civil penalty totaling two hundred forty dollars (\$240.00) for the one violation.

Violation Description	Number of Violations	Associated Civil Penalty per Violation	Civil Penalty Totals
Regulations, § 1777, subd. (c)(3). (Fluids in Cellar)	1	\$240.00	\$240.00
		<b>Total Civil Penalty:</b>	\$240.00

For purposes of this Order, the Supervisor considered relevant circumstances when establishing the amount of the administrative civil penalty, including: characterizing the violations as “minor” (as defined in PRC section 3236.5, subdivision (b)), the eight factors identified in PRC section 3236.5, subdivision (a), and the following: the Well is environmentally sensitive, as defined by Regulations section 1760, subdivision (f), and the Well is a critical well, as defined by Regulations section 1720, subdivision (a).

**B. Remedial Work**

Pursuant to PRC section 3224, the Supervisor hereby orders Operator to complete remedial work to come into compliance with Regulations section 1777, as outlined below in Operator's Required Actions.

**Operator's Required Actions**

For the reasons stated herein, pursuant to PRC sections 3013, 3106, 3224, 3225, and 3236.5, and Regulations section 1777, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that Operator:

- 1) Pay an administrative civil penalty of two hundred forty dollars (\$240.00); and
- 2) In accordance with PRC section 3224 and Regulations section 1777 Operator is required to:

a. Drain the well cellar, at the following well:

API	Well Designation
0402904224	Houghton 28-35

To remit payment of the civil penalty online, please visit <https://www.govone.com/PAYCAL/Home/SelectAgency> and select "California Department of Conservation Geologic Energy Management Division," then follow the instructions on the screen.

To remit payment of the civil penalty by mail, please send a check payable to "Department of Conservation" to the following address:

Department of Conservation  
CalGEM, Attn: Operational Management Unit  
715 P Street, MS 1803  
Sacramento, California 95814

Please include the Operator name, Order number, and phrase "Oil and Gas Environmental Remediation Account" on the check itself.

Upon performing the required remedial work, please contact David Coockey-Gam at CalGEM's Central District via email at David.Cookey-Gam@conservation.ca.gov.

**Operator's Appeal Rights**

Operator may appeal this Order by filing a timely written notice of appeal with the Director as described in Article 6 (Appeals and Review) of Division 3 of the PRC, commencing with PRC section 3350. (PRC, § 3225, subd. (d).) If this Order is mailed to you, the Director must receive the appeal within fifteen (15) days from the date the Supervisor mails the Order. To file an appeal, a written notice of appeal may be sent via U.S. mail to:

Department of Conservation  
Director's Office of Appeals  
715 P Street, MS 19-06 (Legal Office, Chief Counsel)  
Sacramento, California 95814

Or via electronic mail to:

[OfficeofAppeals@conservation.ca.gov](mailto:OfficeofAppeals@conservation.ca.gov)

If Operator files a timely written notice of appeal, Operator will be informed of the appeal hearing date, time, and place. Following the hearing, Operator will receive a written decision that affirms, sets aside, or modifies the appealed order.

If Operator does not file a timely written notice of appeal, or if the Order is affirmed following an appeal, this Order will become a final order and CalGEM may contract for performance of the work, pursuant to PRC section 3226, if, within 30 days of this Order, Operator has not, in good faith, commenced the work ordered. Any costs incurred by CalGEM to obtain compliance with this Order (which may include penalties and interest) will constitute a lien against Operator's real or personal property per PRC section 3423. (PRC, § 3356.)

**Other Potential Actions to Enforce This Order**

Failure to comply with Section IV (Operator's Required Actions) of this Order could subject Operator to further enforcement action. PRC section 3236 makes it a misdemeanor for any person who violates, fails, neglects, or refuses to comply with any of the provisions of the oil and gas conservation laws commencing at PRC section 3000. PRC sections 3236.2 and

3236.3 authorize the Supervisor to seek for civil penalties and injunctive relief for failure to comply with an order or for violations of any provision in Chapter 1 of Division 3 of the PRC or any regulation that implements those statutes. PRC section 3236.5 authorizes the Supervisor to impose a civil penalty on a person who violates any provision in Chapter 1 of Division 3 of the PRC or any regulation that implements those statutes, and the Supervisor may in the future impose further civil penalties based on the facts and omissions underlying this order. PRC section 3237 authorizes the Supervisor to order the plugging and abandonment of a well or the decommissioning of a production facility if an operator has failed to comply with an order of the Supervisor within the time provided by the order or has failed to challenge the order on a timely basis. PRC section 3359 makes it a misdemeanor to fail or neglect to comply with an order of the Supervisor. Each day's further failure, refusal, or neglect is a separate and distinct offense. (PRC, § 3359.) By issuance of this Order, the Supervisor does not waive the right to take further enforcement actions.

Elizabeth Yura

DATED: 1/23/2025

*Elizabeth Yura*

on behalf of

Doug Ito  
State Oil and Gas Supervisor