



Geologic Energy Management Division

SB 406 Implementation Legislative Report

Reporting Period: May 1, 2023 – April 30, 2024

Prepared Pursuant to Senate Bill 406 (Stern, Chapter 727, Statutes 2021)

November 7, 2025

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ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA GEOLOGIC ENERGY MANAGEMENT DIVISION

The Department of Conservation's California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) prioritizes the protection of public health, safety, and the environment in its oversight of the oil, natural gas, and geothermal operations in California. To do that, CalGEM uses science and sound engineering practices to regulate the drilling, operation, maintenance, and permanent closure of energy resource wells. CalGEM also regulates certain pipelines and facilities associated with production and injection wells. These regulatory duties include conducting inspections, witnessing, and reviewing tests, and permitting and reviewing operations.

When CalGEM was established in 1915 (then known as the Department of Petroleum and Gas), the initial focus of regulation was the protection of oil and gas resources in the State from production practices that could harm the ultimate level of hydrocarbon recovery. Early CalGEM regulations included well spacing requirements and authority to limit production rates. However, those regulations and the focus of CalGEM have evolved and come to include the protection of public health, safety, and the environment.

CalGEM has grown significantly since it was established in 1915 and has taken major steps to ensure it will be able to handle challenges in a manner consistent with public expectations for a modern, efficient, collaborative, and science-driven regulatory agency. In 2019, the mission of CalGEM changed to include protecting public health and safety, environmental quality, and the reduction and mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions associated with the development of hydrocarbon and geothermal resources in a manner that meets the energy needs of the state.

CalGEM Districts

Effective 2021, CalGEM operates out of three districts to best serve the needs of the State: Northern, Central (formerly Inland), and Southern. Each district has its own offices where staff are available to assist the public and interested parties. For more information about CalGEM, visit:

<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem>.



INTRODUCTION

Objective and Scope of the Report

This report provides the second annual progress update on Senate Bill (SB) 406 (Stern, Chapter 727, Statutes 2021) implementation by CalGEM. Public Resources Code section 3108.5 requires that this report address progress on:

- Making all public information collected or maintained by CalGEM, with priority given to well records, well logs, notices of intention, supplementary notices, field reports, inspection reports, correspondence, and other materials, readily available to the public on CalGEM's internet website, except well records required to be held as confidential information pursuant to Public Resources Code section 3234 (organized by well, operator, or project, and searchable) by July 1 2026.
- Making all notices of violation and orders of the State Oil and Gas Supervisor readily available to the public on CalGEM's internet website by July 1, 2024.

This report covers the period between May 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024.

Contact Information

For more information, visit CalGEM's webpage at:

<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem>.

For questions regarding the content of this report, contact the Department of Conservation's Public Affairs Office at pao@conservation.ca.gov.



SB 406 IMPLEMENTATION

Senate Bill (SB) 406 (Stern, Chapter 727, Statutes 2021) requires a number of changes to how data are collected, maintained and made available by the California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) of the Department of Conservation (Department). The bill also requires CalGEM to create outreach programs and provides that upon receiving a complaint from anyone residing within one mile of a well, not just those who own land or operate wells, CalGEM will investigate the well(s) in question.

The Department and CalGEM are committed to providing transparency in their actions, information, and data. While transparency goals are important, and CalGEM either has, or is in the process of making much of the data requested by this bill public, various components of the bill's requirements pose implementation challenges. This report serves to provide background on the bill's requirements, and CalGEM's success in, and capacity for, implementation with existing staff and resources.

SB 406 requires CalGEM to:

- **Make all public information collected or maintained available on CalGEM's internet website (Public Resources Code [PRC] section 3108.5)**
 - **Mandated Implementation Date: July 1, 2026**
 - **Implementation Status: Partially Implemented**

CalGEM is required to:

- Make all Notices of Violation and Orders of the State Oil and Gas Supervisor (Supervisor) available online by July 1, 2024.
- Make continuous progress towards meeting the requirements and ensure materials readily available to the public online steadily increase.
- Give priority to posting "well records, well logs, notices of intention, supplementary notices, field reports, inspection reports, correspondence, and other materials."
- Give priority to public information previously available on CalGEM's internet website and documents associated with wells that have not been plugged and abandoned.
- Ensure all online materials are organized by well, operator, or project, and searchable.

As part of the commitment to public transparency, CalGEM has developed several public data tools and resources to support public access to CalGEM's data. These tools include a new Well Statewide Tracking and Reporting System (WellSTAR) Public Access Portal, the Online Data Dashboard, Well Finder, and other tools that enable users to access well records, permits, project data, information on well stimulation treatments,



well maintenance data, production, and injection information:

- WellSTAR is CalGEM's main system of records and provides information on well stimulation treatment permits, well stimulation disclosures, well maintenance data, well records, and underground injection control (UIC) projects. CalGEM provides a library of video tutorials for navigating the WellSTAR platform at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qUHoahXxOA&list=PLErBtDSML9r5xhyJJ1hvPQlhcT9u5afr>
- The WellSTAR Data Dashboard is used to view and filter large sets of CalGEM data, including injection information, permits, and underground gas storage (UGS):
<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/OnlineData/Pages/WellSTAR-Data-Dashboard.aspx>.
- WellSTAR information for operators is at:
https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/for_operators/Pages/WellSTAR.aspx
- Well Finder is a web mapping application used to spatially view wells, and access associated permits and project data. It can help with well locations, statuses, and histories: <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/Pages/WellFinder.aspx>
- The Well Record Search function is available for automated requesting of Well Records: <https://filerequest.conservation.ca.gov/WellRecord>
- The Geothermal Data and Maps web page provides access to downloadable data and pdf maps of geothermal fields:
<https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/geothermal/>
- The GIS mapping tool uses geographical data to create information-rich maps that benefit understanding, analysis, and decision-making:
<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/maps/Pages/GISMapping2.aspx>

CalGEM has made progress in implementing the bill's mandates. Some previously reported functionalities added in a December 2021 WellSTAR expansion included expanded access to:

- Well, facility, and lease records
- Incident reports
- Inspection reports
- Test records
- Underground injection control projects
- Underground gas storage projects

Additional functionality in a September 2023 WellSTAR Release included newly expanded access to:

- Compliance and Violation records
- Facility and Lease data
- Organization Information
- Additional Underground Gas Storage Project data



CalGEM has taken steps to make Notice of Violation records available online in WellSTAR, consistent with the mandate of PRC section 3108.5(a)(2). While Notice of Violations are generally available in WellSTAR, they are located on the well or facility pages for the wells or facilities associated with the violations. CalGEM continues to work on solutions to improve WellSTAR functionality and make violations readily available and increase transparency in the WellSTAR system.

CalGEM has expanded its practice of making administrative orders of the Supervisor available on its website. CalGEM previously had a procedure of posting orders after full adjudication of any appeal, or when publication was necessary to service of the order. Orders were temporarily unavailable online as CalGEM worked to remediate documents to address accessibility issues. Accessibility compliance is described in more detail in the following section. CalGEM has resolved the accessibility issues for orders and now makes all orders available on its website as the order is served. Administrative orders of the Supervisor are posted on CalGEM's website at:

https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/Pages/Division_Orders.aspx

Accessibility

Because File Transfer Protocol (FTP) is an insecure protocol, the legacy FTP based file access site had to be decommissioned to meet stringent state-level security, audit, and compliance requirements. The FTP site was replaced with the secure, searchable, online File Request Application. Various CalGEM documents remain available to the public through this application, which was built to align with the Department of Rehabilitation's ADA compliance check list and Assembly Bill 434 (Baker, Chapter 780, Statutes of 2017) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements for state websites. Many of the materials that are currently accessible to the public through the File Request Application would need to be remediated to meet AB 434 requirements before being re-posted for direct access on CalGEM's website. An extensive effort to validate the scope, level of the effort, and identify costs to remediate all CalGEM documents was previously completed. Microsoft, Adobe and an impartial, third-party vendor were contracted to complete an assessment of approximately 2.7 million CalGEM artifacts and historic documents. The initial review estimates that it would take "in excess of \$10 million" to cover a small fraction of the data that would need to be converted for ADA compliance. Due to the age, variety, and complexity of the CalGEM artifacts, a full assessment of all documentation could not be completed by the three vendors.

CalGEM currently requests all new documents submitted by regulated entities be in an ADA compliant format; however, it is not a mandated requirement for operators. Part of the previous assessment included an estimation of the resources and level of effort that would be required if existing staff were to be tasked with remediating only the existing artifacts. The assessment concluded that due to the amount and complexity of CalGEM data, the level of effort would be so resource intensive, that it was improbable it could



ever be completed. This assessment did not take into consideration the remediation of any newly received artifacts that may be submitted by operators. Even with training and appropriate remediation tools, resources are not adequate for all legacy documents to be remediated and posted to meet the bill's mandate.

Despite this, CalGEM is committed to making as many documents available as possible through the File Request Application and WellSTAR. CalGEM recently completed a significant effort of scanning all hardcopy well files and Underground Injection Control project files for its Central District. CalGEM will continue to evaluate means to increase files and documents available to the public.

- **Create and deliver an education and outreach program to local governmental entities on materials collected and maintained by CalGEM related to oil and gas operations (PRC section 3115)**
 - **Mandated Implementation Date: July 1, 2023**
 - **Implementation Status: Implemented**

This requirement was fully implemented, as discussed in the previous year's report. CalGEM has continued education and outreach programs and included additional efforts below for this reporting period. For more information of previous efforts, see 2022-2023 Implementation Report dated May 2024.

<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/Documents/SB%20406%20Implementation%20Report%202023.pdf>

Local Government Education and Outreach CalGEM coordinated and delivered various local government education and outreach engagements between 2021 and 2023. The Department has continued to deepen connections with local governments and strives to improve public participation practices that align with authentic engagement principles that are considered best practices nationally. These practices include: Planning and preparation; Inclusion and diversity; Openness and learning; Engagement and participation. The department has also been working to deepen its commitment to language access. All CalGEM's public meetings include Spanish interpretation and handouts in both Spanish and English. If appropriate, the Department may lead public meetings in Spanish and provide interpretation in English. To learn more about these efforts visit: <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/index/Pages/Outreach-Engagement.aspx>

During this reporting period, CalGEM continued outreach on State Oil and Gas Well Abandonment and presented the draft State Oil and Gas Well Abandonment Expenditure Plan (Plan) in a special public meeting in July 2023. Public comments were received and the final Plan was presented at the October 2023 and February 2024 public Methane Task Force Meetings. These meetings share updates with the public on efforts aimed at addressing methane leaks from oil and gas infrastructure, and to



elevate opportunities for deeper public and local agency engagement efforts. The Plan was also presented in October 2023 to tribal groups across the state that may be impacted by the State Oil and Gas Well Abandonment program. Additional meetings have been held during the reporting period with various environment justice groups, local governments, and various agencies, including agencies with the City of Los Angeles, the Shafter Community Steering Committee, the Arvin/Lamont Area Community Steering Committee, the Kern Oil and Gas Community (environmental justice groups throughout Kern County), and Climate First: Replacing Oil and Gas and the Sierra Club.

In addition to updates on the Plan, the Methane Task Force meetings also included presentations on the joint oil and gas field inspections for fugitive emissions from oil and gas wells. These joint inspections were performed by CalGEM and the California Air Resources Board. Information on these engagements, including YouTube video of the presentations can be found at:

<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/Pages/PublicOutreachandCommunityEngagement.aspx>

- **Require a copy of the local land use authorization that supports the installation of a well to be submitted with the Notice of Intention (NOI) for the well**
- **Modify forms used to evaluate NOIs to include local land use authorization expiration dates (PRC section 3203.5)**
 - **Mandated Implementation Date: January 1, 2022**
 - **Implementation Status: Not Implemented**

Operators are responsible for providing documentation to CalGEM indicating that the applicable local agency permit has been obtained. WellSTAR has a process for entering information for Notice of Intention (NOI) forms. The requirement for forms to include expiration dates for the required local land use authorizations requires modifications to WellSTAR and will be difficult to achieve given inconsistent practices by local agencies.

CalGEM has implemented an engagement protocol with key local jurisdictions to confirm and make part of the record accurate local land use permitting documentation. This includes work with the City of Los Angeles to develop and implement a new process to ensure both CalGEM and the city are coordinated on their review of NOI forms.

WellSTAR does offer, as part of the form for submitting permits for review, functionality that allows any permits issued by the local agency to be uploaded by the operator, although not all local agencies issue permits. To include a *requirement* for a copy of the local land use authorization that supports the installation of the well at the time of submittal of the NOI would require a WellSTAR modification, and for CalGEM to



implement supplementary procedures.

- **Require the history of a well to include all acid treatment data of any amount (PRC section 3213)**
 - **Mandated Implementation Date: January 1, 2022**
 - **Implementation Status: Mostly Implemented**

SB 406 requires the history of a well to include “all acid treatment data of any amount”. Prior to SB 406, the well history included the location and amount of sidetracked casings, tools, or other material, the depth and quantity of cement in cement plugs, the shots of dynamite or other explosives, “acid treatment data”, and the results of production and other tests during drilling operations.

All data on well stimulation treatments pursuant to PRC section 3160 is currently required to be recorded in the well history. Acid well stimulation treatments include acid matrix stimulation treatments and acid fracturing treatments. Acid matrix stimulation treatments are acid treatments conducted at pressures lower than the applied pressure necessary to fracture the underground geologic formation.

California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 1777.4, also includes reporting requirements relating to well maintenance and cleanout that involves emplacing fluid containing acid in the well. The required information includes a description of the nature and purpose of the operation, the volume of fluid emplaced in the well in the course of the operation, including specification of the gallons per treated foot, and calculation of the acid volume threshold for the operation.

These records are available in WellSTAR, with notifications provided to the CalGEM's Well Stimulation Treatment unit based on volumes and penetration depths.

Subject to approval by CalGEM, an operator is also able to propose a plan for submitting aggregated information regarding a specific type of repeated operation that involves emplacing fluid containing acid in the well yet clearly does not meet the definition of a well stimulation treatment.

SB 406 provides that data reported for acid treatment occurring before December 31, 2021, and that complies with the requirements of section 1777.4, satisfies the bill's new reporting requirement.

On July 18, 2022, CalGEM released a Request for Information (RFI), with comments accepted through August 31, 2022. This document outlined CalGEM's objectives for the RFI and included discussion questions to aid CalGEM in information and data gathering.



Members of the public were encouraged to provide input on how best to accomplish these goals. Suggestions about a specific regulatory approach, comments on objectives, and answers to general discussion questions were invited, together with discussion of the value and benefits of the approach. References to specific wells, published data, and research were highly encouraged.

The stated objectives of the RFI were to:

- Understand the various uses and benefits of currently reported acid treatment data.
- Identify additional information that could be valuable for acid treatment reporting.
- Identify the best-available science for reporting on fluids containing acids used in well operations.
- Explore possible ways to implement new requirements in Public Resources Code section 3213 for the reporting of well treatments containing acid.

The RFI is available at:

<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/Documents/CalGEM%20Request%20for%20Information%20Acid%20Treatment%20Data%20Reporting%20July%202022.pdf>.

CalGEM received a total of seven written comments from interested parties. CalGEM subject matter experts reviewed, analyzed, and provided appropriate responses to all written comments. They convened a virtual meeting with one of the respondents to discuss their comments and suggestions.

The commenters expressed general support for strengthening regulations related to enhanced acid treatment data reporting. However, CalGEM concluded current requirements for reporting acid treatment data under existing regulations already address the most relevant concerns. In addition, other recent legislation, SB 1137 (Gonzalez, Ch. 365, Statutes of 2022) imposes additional requirements on oil and gas operations that also address commenter concerns.

- **Require operators to provide information electronically (PRC section 3227)**
 - **Mandated Implementation Date: July 1, 2023**
 - **Implementation Status: Mostly Implemented**

Existing law requires the owner of any well to file with the Supervisor a monthly statement that provides certain information relating to the well, including the source, volume, treatment, and disposition of water produced in oil and gas activities. Existing law also requires the owner of any well to file with the Supervisor, on a quarterly basis, specified information relating to the well and requires any operator that produces oil by the



application of mining or other unconventional techniques to file a report with the Supervisor, on or before March 1 of each year, showing the amount of oil produced by those techniques in the preceding calendar year.

SB 406 requires, on or before July 1, 2023, all operators to provide to CalGEM the information described above electronically.

CalGEM's WellSTAR reporting system allows all the required information to be submitted electronically. In addition, in March 2024, CalGEM implemented additional measures to ensure timely and accurate submission of production and injection data. A rulemaking process with a specific focus on electronic submissions is likely required to give clear guidance to operators. Rulemaking activities, in consideration of other regulatory priorities, continue to be evaluated.

Furthermore, CalGEM has continued to host workshops for oil and gas operators on Forms 110 and 122, specific to production/injection reporting and annual submission requirements to encourage increased electronic submissions. CalGEM hosted workshops for Form 122 submission in February 2024 and on Form 110 submission in June 2024. This included a live demonstration of the submission process for operators. CalGEM also offered consultation opportunities for operators to provide further guidance and address specific challenges associated with the Form 122 submissions. Finally, CalGEM has established a dedicated helpdesk to address WellSTAR issues identified by stakeholders.

- **Perform an investigation of a well(s) upon receipt of a written complaint from a person residing within a radius of one mile (PRC section 3235)**
 - **Mandated Implementation Date: January 1, 2022**
 - **Implementation Status: Implemented**

This requirement was fully implemented, as discussed in the previous year's report. CalGEM does not have any updates and continues to respond to complaints received. For more information, see 2022-2023 Implementation Report dated May 2024.

<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/Documents/SB%20406%20Implementation%20Report%202023.pdf>

The Community Concern webpage and mailbox set up in 2021 continues to give the public an opportunity to report non-emergency concerns, problems, or complaints regarding a local operator, an oil and gas well site, or possible oil and gas well happenings in their communities. CalGEM promotes these tools in outreach engagement meetings and presentations, such as the Methane Task Force meetings.

The Community Concern webpage is found at:

<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/Pages/community-concern.aspx>



- **Post information supporting the annual rate or rates of assessments on website (PRC section 3412)**
 - **Mandated Implementation Date: January 1, 2022**
 - **Implementation Status: Implemented**

This requirement was fully implemented, as discussed in the previous year's report. For more information, see 2022-2023 Implementation Report dated May 2024.

<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/Documents/SB%20406%20Implementation%20Report%202023.pdf>

Beginning with the 2023 assessment, information supporting the calculation of the annual assessment rate has been posted on the existing assessment web page at:

https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/for_operators/Pages/Assessments.aspx.



APPENDIX A – PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTION 3108.5

Public Resources Code section 3108.5

(a) (1) On or before July 1, 2026, the supervisor shall make all public information collected or maintained by the division, with priority given to well records, well logs, notices of intention, supplementary notices, field reports, inspection reports, correspondence, and other materials, readily available to the public on the division's internet website, except well records required to be held as confidential information pursuant to Section 3234. All online materials shall be organized by well, operator, or project, and searchable.

(2) On or before July 1, 2024, the supervisor shall make all notices of violation and orders of the supervisor readily available to the public on the division's internet website.

(b) The supervisor shall make continuous progress towards meeting the requirements of subdivision (a) and the materials readily available to the public online shall steadily increase. Priority shall be given to public information regarding well records, well logs, notices of intention, notices of violation, supplementary notices, field reports, inspection reports, and correspondence previously available on the division's internet website and documents associated with wells that have not been plugged and abandoned.

(c) (1) The supervisor shall, commencing July 1, 2023, provide an annual update to the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water on progress made toward meeting the requirements of subdivision (a).

(2) The requirement for submitting a report imposed under paragraph (1) is inoperative on July 1, 2027, pursuant to Section 10231.5 of the Government Code.



Contact

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