

Bulletin 2023-32

September 5, 2023

New Edition of *Directive 020*

Today we released a new edition of [Directive 020: Well Abandonment](#). The changes in section 5.4 amend the requirements for abandoning cased-hole wells penetrating an oil sands zone. These changes were reflected in the draft directive released on June 13, 2023, on which public feedback was accepted until July 12, 2023 (see [Bulletin 2023-26](#)). A summary of what we heard and our responses is available on the *Directive 020* landing page.

Directive 020 allows for routine abandonment of wells penetrating an oil sands zone using the requirements in section 5.3, “Wells Not Penetrating the Oil Sands Zones,” if the subject well meets the criteria for low thermal potential:

- The well is within the boundary of an oil sands area that the AER has assessed as having a low potential for thermal development.
- A qualified geoscientist has determined the well has a low potential for thermal development.
- The AER approved a variance for nonthermal well abandonment within an oil sands area.

The revised edition of *Directive 020* is available on our website at [aer.ca](#) > Regulating Development > Rules and Directives > [Directives](#). If you have any questions, contact our Customer Contact Centre by phone at 1-855-297-8311 or by email at inquiries@aer.ca.