

Bulletin 2024-21

August 8, 2024

Invitation for Feedback on Revisions to *Directive 020*

We are seeking feedback on updates to *Directive 020: Well Abandonment*.

In February 2021, section 5 of *Directive 020* was updated to allow for routine commingled or unsegregated abandonment of specific AER-identified subsurface geological strata in a defined geographic area in southeastern Alberta. This change was based on the Alberta Geological Survey (AGS) study [Open File Report 2019-06: A Risk-Based Methodology for Commingled Well Abandonment – Southeastern Alberta Gas Field Case Study](#).

The AGS has completed a similar commingled abandonment study for geological strata in central Alberta. Based on the findings of this multiyear geoscience study, specific geological strata in a defined geographic area have been identified as eligible for routine commingled abandonment. Section 5 of *Directive 020* has been updated along with web copy for *Directive 020* that provides information on qualified pools for commingled abandonment in central Alberta and a map of the new routine commingled abandonment region.

In addition, we have made changes allowing retrievable mechanical plugs to remain in the well after abandonment and changes concerning the approach to remedial cementing of wells. The AER is looking at allowing a layered cementing methodology in a select number of wells to evaluate the regulatory effectiveness of this methodology while ensuring the risk to public safety and environmental protection are mitigated. To support this evaluation, we have developed a form to request nonroutine remedial cementing of wells. As outlined in the “Layered Cement Plug Variance Submission” form, regulated parties must provide the AER with data before and after executing the operation. The AER will review the data gathered from these select wells and determine if any other regulatory changes are necessary.

To provide feedback on the proposed revisions to *Directive 020*, complete the [public comment form](#) on our website. Comments in other formats can be emailed to [Directive020@aer.ca](mailto:Directive020@ aer.ca) or mailed to Alberta Energy Regulator, Suite 1000, 250 – 5 Street SW, Calgary, Alberta T2P 0R4. Feedback will be accepted through **September 20, 2024**.

All feedback received will be reviewed and may be used in finalizing *Directive 020*. The comments provided through this consultation will form part of the public record and may be attributed to the specific

individuals who provided them. Personal information provided with comments will be collected, used, and disclosed in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. We may use the personal contact information you provide for follow-up communication related to your feedback.

The revised edition of *Directive 020* is available on our website at www.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](mailto:inquiries@ aer.ca).