

Frequently Asked Questions

Directive 056: Energy Development Applications and Schedules – Well Applications

January 2022

Q1. Why do applications that change a unique well identifier (UWI) take longer to be approved at the end of the month?

A1. Because of volumetric data updates between the AER and [Petrinex](#), starting around the 21st of each month, any application that changes a UWI will not be processed for at least four to five business days. UWIs can change in applications and information updates to amend bottomhole locations, re-entry or resumption applications, and applications to change an oil sands evaluation well to a conventional well.

Q2. How do I make an application for a geo-exchange well that will be drilled deeper than 150 m and above the base of groundwater protection?

A2. Before submitting an application, the applicant must first satisfy the consultation and notification requirements for a Category B well set out in table 5 of [Directive 056](#). When submitting the application in [OneStop](#), make the following selections (see table 8 of [Manual 012: Energy Development Applications Procedures and Schedules](#)):

- well type “Evaluation”
- substance name “None”
- classification option “Other (OTH)”
- confidential options “Non-Confidential (NC)”

Fill out all other fields as per *Directive 056* requirements.

The AER is currently reviewing the regulatory process pertaining to geo-exchange wells. However, until this review is complete, the AER expects the applicant to submit the following supplemental information with the application:

- A geological evaluation of the area to ensure that shallow gas will not be encountered during drilling of the well and groundwater will be protected. The evaluation should include information on any surface casing vent flow and lost circulation events for wells in the area.

- A drilling and completion plan for the well, including casing and cementing.
- A discussion on whether well logging will be completed and reasons why an exemption may be required.
- An operations plan that includes the configuration of the geo-exchange equipment and wellhead and the type of liquid that will be circulated.
- A monitoring and maintenance plan for the well and equipment.
- A discussion of any relaxation to setback requirements that may be required.

The supplemental information can be uploaded to your application in OneStop by indicating that the surface casing requirements of [Directive 008: Surface Casing Depth Requirements](#) have not been met and that a surface casing variance has not been obtained. The information can then be attached to the application.

In accordance with *Directive 056*, section 7.4, the AER grants licence exemptions to wells drilled to a depth of less than 150 m that are not intended to encounter or produce hydrocarbons. If an applicant is planning to drill a geo-exchange well in an area where shallow hydrocarbons are known to occur, an application should be made that includes the supplemental information listed above.