

**Subpart 3256—Exploration Operations Relief and Appeals**

**§ 3256.10 May I request a variance from any BLM requirements?**

(a) Yes, you may request a variance for your exploration operations from the requirements of 43 CFR 3200.4. Your request must include enough information to explain:

- (1) Why you cannot comply; and
- (2) Why you need the variance to control your well, conserve natural resources, protect public health and safety, property, or the environment.

(b) We may approve your request verbally or in writing. If we give you a verbal approval, we will follow up with written confirmation.

**§ 3256.11 How may I appeal a BLM decision regarding my exploration operations?**

You may appeal a BLM decision regarding your exploration operations in accordance with 43 CFR 3200.5.

**Subpart 3260—Geothermal Drilling Operations—General**

**§ 3260.10 What types of geothermal operations are covered by these regulations?**

(a) The regulations in 43 CFR subparts 3260 through 3267 establish permitting and operating procedures for drilling wells and conducting related activities for the purpose of performing flow tests, producing geothermal fluids, or injecting fluids into a geothermal reservoir. These subparts also address re-drilling, deepening, plugging back, and other subsequent well operations.

(b) The operations regulations in subparts 3260 through 3267 do not address conducting exploration operations, which are covered in subpart 3250 of this part, or geothermal resources utilization, which is covered in subpart 3270 of this part.

**§ 3260.11 What general standards apply to my drilling operations?**

Your drilling operations must:

- (a) Meet all environmental and operational standards;
- (b) Prevent unnecessary impacts to surface and subsurface resources;

(c) Conserve geothermal resources and minimize waste;

(d) Protect public health, safety and property; and,

(e) Comply with the requirements of 43 CFR 3200.4.

**§ 3260.12 What other orders or instructions may BLM issue me?**

We may issue:

(a) Geothermal resource operational orders, for detailed requirements that apply nationwide;

(b) Notices to lessees, for detailed requirements on a statewide or regional basis;

(c) Other orders and instructions specific to a field or area;

(d) Permit conditions of approval; and

(e) Verbal orders which will be confirmed in writing.

**Subpart 3261—Drilling Operations: Getting a Permit**

**§ 3261.10 How do I get approval to begin well pad construction?**

(a) If you do not have an approved geothermal drilling permit, form 3260-2, apply using a complete and signed sundry notice, form 3260-3, to build well pads and access roads. Send us a complete operations plan (see 43 CFR 3261.12) and an acceptable bond with your sundry notice. You may start well pad construction once we approve your sundry notice.

(b) If you already have an approved drilling permit and you have provided an acceptable bond, you do not need any further permission from BLM to start well pad construction unless you intend to change something from the approved permit. Send us a complete and signed sundry notice so we may review your proposed change. Do not proceed with the change until we approve your sundry notice.

**§ 3261.11 How do I get approval for drilling operations and well pad construction?**

(a) Send us:

(1) A completed and signed drilling permit application;

(2) A complete operations plan (43 CFR 3261.12);