

Environmental Protection Agency

§ 146.12

which will not allow the movement of fluids either into or between underground sources of drinking water. The Director may allow Class III wells to use other plugging materials if the Director is satisfied that such materials will prevent movement of fluids into or between underground sources of drinking water.

(2) Placement of the cement plugs shall be accomplished by one of the following:

- (i) The Balance method;
- (ii) The Dump Bailer method;
- (iii) The Two-Plug method; or
- (iv) An alternative method approved by the Director, which will reliably provide a comparable level of protection to underground sources of drinking water.

(3) The well to be abandoned shall be in a state of static equilibrium with the mud weight equalized top to bottom, either by circulating the mud in the well at least once or by a comparable method prescribed by the Director, prior to the placement of the cement plug(s).

(4) The plugging and abandonment plan required in 40 CFR 144.51(o) and 144.52(a)(6) shall, in the case of a Class III project which underlies or is in an aquifer which has been exempted under § 146.04, also demonstrate adequate protection of USDWs. The Director shall prescribe aquifer cleanup and monitoring where he deems it necessary and feasible to insure adequate protection of USDWs.

(b) Requirements for Class IV wells. Prior to abandoning a Class IV well, the owner or operator shall close the well in accordance with 40 CFR 144.23(b).

(c) Requirements for Class V wells. (1) Prior to abandoning a Class V well, the owner or operator shall close the well in a manner that prevents the movement of fluid containing any contaminant into an underground source of drinking water, if the presence of that contaminant may cause a violation of any primary drinking water regulation under 40 CFR part 141 or may otherwise adversely affect the health of persons. Closure requirements for motor vehicle waste disposal wells and large-capacity cesspools are reiterated at § 144.89.

(2) The owner or operator shall dispose of or otherwise manage any soil, gravel, sludge, liquids, or other materials removed from or adjacent to the well in accordance with all applicable Federal, State, and local regulations and requirements.

[64 FR 68573, Dec. 7, 1999]

Subpart B—Criteria and Standards Applicable to Class I Wells

§ 146.11 Criteria and standards applicable to Class I nonhazardous wells.

This subpart establishes criteria and standards for underground injection control programs to regulate Class I nonhazardous wells.

[53 FR 28148, July 26, 1988]

§ 146.12 Construction requirements.

(a) All Class I wells shall be sited in such a fashion that they inject into a formation which is beneath the lowermost formation containing, within one quarter mile of the well bore, an underground source of drinking water.

(b) All Class I wells shall be cased and cemented to prevent the movement of fluids into or between underground sources of drinking water. The casing and cement used in the construction of each newly drilled well shall be designed for the life expectancy of the well. In determining and specifying casing and cementing requirements, the following factors shall be considered:

- (1) Depth to the injection zone;
- (2) Injection pressure, external pressure, internal pressure, and axial loading;
- (3) Hole size;
- (4) Size and grade of all casing strings (wall thickness, diameter, nominal weight, length, joint specification, and construction material);
- (5) Corrosiveness of injected fluid, formation fluids, and temperatures;
- (6) Lithology of injection and confining intervals; and
- (7) Type or grade of cement.

(c) All Class I injection wells, except those municipal wells injecting non-corrosive wastes, shall inject fluids through tubing with a packer set immediately above the injection zone, or tubing with an approved fluid seal as