

WELL PLUGGING AND RECLAMATION PRIORITY DETERMINATION PROCEDURES

Attached are the two approved well plugging priority systems for Orphaned and Idled wells. The priority system includes 5 factors for Idled wells and 14 factors for Orphaned wells. The priority system includes factors for hydrogen sulfide, environmental, safety, human health and wildlife.

The priority system includes a factor for other environmental and safety concerns. The weight of this factor ranges from 1 to 5 points. The weight of this factor will be dependent on the impact that a well poses to the environment, safety or the area's economics. If the factor does not apply, then a weight of zero (0) should be given. This would be the same for the other factors. If the Forest/District office is unsure as to what weight this factor should be assigned when preparing a request for plugging, this matter should be discussed with appropriate program leads in the State or Regional Offices. Some examples that may apply under this factor are: a well that contains corroded or leaking valves on the wellhead, or a well that contains corroded casing or no casing at all. The following procedures should be followed when determining the priority for a well recommended for plugging:

1. Submit only 1 priority determination worksheet for each well recommended for plugging. Use the attached worksheets.
2. Use only the factors that apply to the well recommended for plugging and reclamation.
3. For sites with multiple wells, each well should have its own worksheet.
4. Priority 1 will apply to leaking wells for both Orphaned and Idled wells or a total score > 24 for an Idled well and > 35 for an Orphaned well.