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| **NTL 87-1**  Notice to Lessees and Operators of Onshore Federal and Indian  Oil and Gas Leases Within the Jurisdiction  of the New Mexico State Office  (NTL 87-1 New Mexico)    **Painting of Oil Field Facilities to Minimize Visual Impacts**   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | I. Introduction and Purpose  Consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recognizes the visual resource to be part of the environment that requires protection and that the painting of oil field equipment and structures to minimize visual impacts may be required of Federal and Indian oil and gas lessees/operators. The following are the requirements for the painting of oil field facilities on Federal and Indian oil and gas leases within the Jurisdiction of the New Mexico State Office (New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas). All operations conducted on Federal and Indian oil and gas leases in these states must conform to the requirements of this Notice as well as those contained in the Oil and Gas Operating Regulations, Title 43 CFR Part 3160 and Approval of Operations on Onshore Federal and Indian Oil and Gas Leases, Onshore Oil and Gas Order No. 1.  .  II. Procedures    A. New Facilities     1. The painting of facilities a specific color to minimize visual impacts on a Federal or Indian lease may be required by the BLM Authorized Officer (AO) as a condition of approval for a lease operation involving the construction of such facilities. This would include, but is not limited to, approval of an Application for Permit to Drill (APD) or a Sundry Notice where new surface facilities are proposed. The decision to impose this condition of approval is that of the AO based upon a regional or site specific assessment of the visual impacts caused by.the proposed facilities. 2. If painting is required to reduce visual impacts all permanent structures (those on-site for more than 90 days after completion of a-well) will be painted, except as noted below. Equipment that is not normally painted will not require painting. It is desirable that as much equipment as possible be painted a uniform, noncontrasting color. The specific equipment and structures to be painted and the color to be used will be made a condition of approval by the AO. 3. Painting to reduce visual impacts will not be required when specific colors are necessary for safety. Exceptions for safety or other purposes will be reviewed and approved by the AO as part of the condition of approval. 4. Color selection will be determined by the dominant color or combination of colors in a particular landscape and specifically identified in the condition of approval. The color will be selected from local earth or vegetative tones to approximate or appear slightly darker than the overall color of the surrounding terrain. Non-reflective paint will be used. Selection of the color for a specific application shall be limited to a single, solid color. There shall be no effort to implement military camouflage techniques.     B. Existing Facilities     1. For facilities existing on the effective date of this Notice (the date approved by the State Director) for which painting was not a condition of approval, repainting a specific color to minimize the visual impact may be required by the AO when the operator proposes to repaint or replace the equipment. 2. Lessee/operators will, upon request of the AO, submit a repainting and/or replacement schedule for existing facilities. The schedule is a guide for planning purposes, subject to change. If the AO determines that painting a specific color is necessary to minimize visual impacts based upon an assessment of the visual impacts caused by the facilities, he/she will require that when facilities are repainted or replaced by the operator, they be painted a specific color in accordance with II.A. 2, 3, and 4, above.     III. Non-BLM Surface Jurisdiction     1. Federal Surface Management Agencies (SMA) other than the BLM may have different requirements than those outlined above or may not require painting to minimize visual impacts. Any painting requirements imposed by the AO must have the concurrence of the Federal SMA. 2. The procedures outlined above involve Federal and Indian lease operations on Federal, Private, Indian Trust, or State surface. If there is a surface owner-operator agreement on non-Federal surface requesting a deviation or requesting that facilities not be painted, the painting requirements will be altered or not imposed, as agreed to by the operator and surface owner.      |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | APPROVED: | Date: 5-29-87 | Larry L. Woodard New Mexico State Director | | | |