

CHAPTER 11: OIL, GAS, AND MINERAL RESOURCES

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PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY OF REGULATIONS

The Oil, Gas, and Minerals Division (OGMD) of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) fosters the conservation and orderly development of hydrocarbon and mineral resources, while preventing damage to the environment and

protecting public health and safety. The OGMD also maintains a variety of geological and regulatory records, maps, publications, and computerized information for public use. Although most manufacturers in the state do not participate in activities that are regulated by the OGMD, it is important to have a general understanding of the various OGMD programs in case you interact with industries, such as mining, that are regulated.

AGENCIES AND THEIR LAWS AND RULES

The OGMD regulates oil, gas, and mineral resources by administering parts of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Public Act 451 of 1994, as amended (Act 451): Part 615 (Supervisor of Wells), Part 616 (Orphan Well Fund), Part 617 (Unitization), Part 625 (Mineral Wells), Part 631 (Ferrous Mineral Mining), Part 632 (Nonferrous Metallic Mineral Mining), Part 635 (Surface and Underground Coal Mine Reclamation), and Part 637 (Sand Dune Mining). Some of the OGMD's programs and areas of involvement include oil and gas and mineral well permitting, ferrous and non-ferrous metallic mining and reclamation activities, and sand dune mining. The OGMD also serves as a collector and distributor of a variety of geological information and records. The following is a brief description of each of these programs.

11.1 GEOLOGICAL INFORMATION AND RECORDS

The OGMD maintains regulatory records on oil, gas, and mineral programs, maps, and publications on the geology of Michigan. This information includes records for over 70,000 oil, gas, and mineral wells; maps and documents on surficial and bedrock geology, fuel and mineral resources; and geological topics of general interest.

11.2 OIL AND GAS

The OGMD regulates the locating, spacing, drilling, operating, and plugging of oil and gas wells, and the operation of associated storage and disposal facilities. The OGMD also regulates oil and gas production rates and allocates production among the owners of a common reservoir. The OGMD reviews applications and issues permits to drill and operate wells for the production of oil and gas and for the disposal of associated brine. The OGMD staff conduct inspections of oil and gas sites for compliance with regulatory requirements.

The OGMD manages cleanups at oil, gas, and mineral sites utilizing Part 201 (Environmental Remediation) as a guide. See [Chapter 7](#) for more information about environmental remediation.

The OGMD utilizes the Orphan Well Fund to plug oil and gas wells and conducts associated cleanup activities where no owner or operator is known, for which owners or operators are insolvent, or where an environmental emergency is declared.

11.3 MINERAL WELLS

The OGMD oversees the location, construction, operation, and closure of [mineral wells](#), which includes wells for waste disposal, brine production, solution mining, underground storage, and mineral exploration. The OGMD reviews applications and issues permits for mineral wells, compiles records, and conducts inspections to ensure compliance.

11.3.1 Waste Disposal

Some manufacturers in the state [dispose of liquid wastes by underground injection](#). The OGMD regulates the wells used for this disposal. In addition, these wells are regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), Underground Injection Control Branch. In those instances where the waste is considered hazardous and the manufacturer is storing and/or treating the waste prior to discharge, the treatment and storage facilities are subject to regulations administered by EGLE's Hazardous Waste Program (see [Chapter 2](#) for more information).

Visit EGLE's [Treatment, Storage, and Disposal Facilities](#) web page for information concerning permitting of those facilities



Contact the U.S. EPA, Region 5, Underground Injection Control Branch for questions concerning federal Underground Injection Control Regulations and permitting. Call 312-886-2446 or visit epa.gov/uic.



11.4 MINING

The OGMD regulates several mining industries in Michigan including metallic mining, native copper mining, sand dune mining, and coal mining. The OGMD enforces regulations which address issues such as transportation, storage, treatment, and disposal of ore and waste rock, and plans for mining and reclamation. The mining industries are also regulated by other environmental statutes and divisions within EGLE such as the [Air Quality Division](#) and the [Water Resources Division](#).

11.4.1 Ferrous Mineral (Iron) Mining

Regulated by [Part 631: Ferrous Mining](#), ferrous- or iron-containing minerals are used in common manufactured products. Michigan's iron-bearing formations have long been sources of these important minerals. The OGMD administers [Part 631: Ferrous Mining](#), and oversees mine operation, environmental issues, and reclamation. Like nonferrous metallic mining, other divisions of EGLE are involved in permitting and regulation of Michigan's iron mining industry.

11.4.2 Non-Ferrous Metallic Mining

Regulated by [Part 632: Nonferrous Metallic Mining](#), nonferrous minerals are important economic minerals such as copper, nickel, zinc, gold, and silver. Some of these metals are very important

globally for manufacturing, including production of green technologies such as electric vehicles and emission control catalysts. [Part 632: Nonferrous Metallic Mining](#) provides a sound regulatory framework for construction, operation, and reclamation of mining operations required for the safe and environmentally sustainable extraction of these metallic minerals. EGLE's OGMD implements Part 632. The nonferrous metallic mining industry is also regulated by other environmental statutes and divisions within EGLE, such as the [Air Quality Division](#) and the [Water Resources Division](#).

11.4.3 Sand Dune Mining

The OGMD regulates sand mining in designated coastal sand dune areas pursuant to [Part 637 \(Sand Dune Areas\)](#). The OGMD reviews sand dune mining applications and issues permits, evaluates mining and reclamation plans, determines financial responsibility requirements, conducts regular inspections, and pursues enforcement action as necessary.

11.4.4 Coal Mining

[Part 635: Coal Mining](#), regulates the coal mining industry. A Coal Mine Reclamation Permit, pursuant to Part 635 and administered by the OGMD, is required for mining coal in Michigan. Coal mining began in Michigan in the 1800s, but the last active mines closed in the 1950s. There has been no economic interest in Michigan coal for many decades; however, the OGMD provides available information related to old coal mines when legacy issues arise, typically construction projects near old mine shafts.

Related Coal Mining Maps and Information: [Coal Mine Statewide Map](#) and [Michigan's Coal Report](#).

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

Websites, program contacts, and publications/resources for common air regulations topics

EGLE Oil, Gas, and Minerals Division

Conservation, regulation, and protection of oil, gas, sand dunes, brines, and metallic and non-metallic minerals

Michigan.gov/OGS | 517-284-6823