

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE  
GULF OF MEXICO OCS REGION**

NTL No. 2008-G21

Effective Date: October 17, 2008

NOTICE TO LESSEES AND OPERATORS OF FEDERAL OIL, GAS, AND SULPHUR  
LEASES, AND PIPELINE RIGHT-OF-WAY HOLDERS  
ON THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF, GULF OF MEXICO OCS REGION

**Damage Caused by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike (Supplement)**

This Notice to Lessees and Operators and Pipeline Right-of-way Holders (NTL) supplements NTL No. 2008-G18, effective September 25, 2008. The Minerals Management Service (MMS) Gulf of Mexico OCS Region (GOMR) is issuing this NTL pursuant to the regulatory standards set forth in 30 CFR 250.106(b) and (c) to elaborate on the reports you need to prepare and the meetings you need to conduct with the MMS GOMR because of known and potential damage to OCS platforms caused by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike.

**Damages Resulting in Ongoing Pollution**

If you have not already done so, contact the appropriate MMS GOMR District Office within five days of the effective date of this NTL for the purpose of arranging a meeting to discuss how you are addressing ongoing pollution events. Be prepared to show what you are doing to determine the source of the pollution and what you are doing or planning to do to abate the source and eliminate the pollution.

**Pollution Inspection Departures**

Regulations at 30 CFR 250.301(a) require daily pollution inspections of all OCS drilling and production facilities. In some cases, under NTL No. 2008-G03, Pollution Inspection Intervals for Unmanned Facilities, the MMS GOMR has granted departures to allow an increased pollution inspection interval. If you have a platform that is damaged and/or shut in due to Hurricanes Gustav and/or Ike, you may request that the appropriate MMS GOMR District Office grant you a departure to increase the daily or otherwise approved inspection interval until the platform resumes production. However, do not request an interval greater than one week.

Regardless of the MMS GOMR approved pollution inspection intervals in place before these storms, you must inspect daily any location that has ongoing pollution and notify the National Response Center (NRC) of the results daily. Under 30 CFR 254.46(b), you must also report the appropriate MMS GOMR District Office daily if the pollution rate is 1 barrel or more per day. If there is pollution occurring at a rate less than 1 barrel per day, you may make the report to the

appropriate MMS GOMR District Office on a weekly basis. See NTL No. 2008-G08, Hurricane and Tropical Storm Effects Reports, for guidance on making these reports to the MMS GOMR.

### **Meetings to Discuss Storm Recovery Strategies**

In addition to the provisions of NTL No. 2008-G18, contact the appropriate MMS GOMR District Office for the purpose of arranging a meeting to discuss your storm recovery strategies. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure that you have an effective and timely recovery plan in place that addresses all storm damage issues.

In general, the MMS GOMR expects that this meeting will take place as soon as you decide on your initial recovery plans, but no later than 30 days after the effective date of this NTL. It is understood that you may have not completed all required surveys as outlined in NTL No. 2008-G18 at that time; however, this initial meeting will be very beneficial for the MMS GOMR to assess the direction of your recovery plans.

In general, the following priorities are of the most concern to the MMS GOMR in the order listed:

1. Those damaged platforms or rigs that are creating pollution. Pollution volumes and proximity to the shoreline are important factors in establishing priority lists.
2. Those toppled and submerged platforms or rigs that pose threats to navigation. You must mark these locations with buoys in accordance with requirements of the U.S Coast Guard.
3. Those damaged platforms that contain wells which are toppled or are leaning 5 degrees or more, and the only thing preventing pollution is a closed subsurface safety valve.
4. Those damaged, toppled, and submerged platforms or rigs that pose potential threats to other nearby infrastructure if another storm were to come through the area before you address damages from Hurricanes Gustav and Ike.

### **MMS GOMR Expectations Following the Meetings**

Provide the appropriate MMS GOMR District Office with a quarterly report that updates the progress in carrying out your storm recovery plans. If there are slippages in the project timeline for any particular platform, notify the appropriate MMS GOMR District Office as soon as they are anticipated so that necessary MMS approvals can occur with respect to the project timelines. The MMS GOMR expects you to adhere to project timelines unless there are solid reasons preventing that from happening, such as the unavailability of critical resources.

Provide the appropriate MMS GOMR District Office with a current list of contact information for each platform. Due to the storms, as well as operator and contractor changes, many telephone numbers may have changed. Many facilities are now or will soon be placed under different supervision. Several manned facilities have been lost which will necessitate field

records being placed at new locations. With all of these changes, it is often difficult to make contact with the facility operator to schedule an inspection.

### **Guidance Document Statement**

The MMS issues NTL's as guidance documents in accordance with 30 CFR 250.103 to clarify, supplement, and provide more detail about certain MMS regulatory requirements and to outline the information you provide in your various submittals. Under that authority, this NTL sets forth a policy on and an interpretation of regulatory requirements that provides a clear and consistent approach to complying with those requirements. However, if you wish to use an alternate approach for compliance, you may do so, after you receive approval from the appropriate MMS office under 30 CFR 250.141.

### **Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 Statement**

The information collections referred to in this NTL are requirements contained in 30 CFR part 254 and 30 CFR part 250, subparts A and C. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the information collection requirements in these regulations under OMB Control Numbers 1010-0091 for 30 CFR part 254; 1010-0114 for 30 CFR part 250, subpart A; and 1010-0057, for 30 CFR part 250, subpart C. This NTL does not impose additional information collection requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

### **Contacts**

Please address any questions regarding this NTL to the appropriate MMS GOMR District Manager. If your question involves a pipeline right-of-way accessory platform, contact the MMS GOMR Pipeline Section. Refer to NTL No. 2007-G12 for contact information.

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Kevin J. Karl

for Lars T. Herbst  
Regional Director