

gas. These are capital items and are returnable through depreciation.

(2) *Expense items:* Expenditures which must be charged off as expense, regardless of the option provided by this section, are those for labor, fuel, repairs, hauling, supplies, etc., in connection with the operation of the wells and of other facilities on the property for the production of oil or gas.

(d) *Manner of making election.* The option granted in paragraph (a) of this section to charge intangible drilling and development costs to expense may be exercised by claiming intangible drilling and development costs as a deduction on the taxpayer's return for the first taxable year in which the taxpayer pays or incurs such costs; no formal statement is necessary. If the taxpayer fails to deduct such costs as expenses in such return, he shall be deemed to have elected to recover such costs through depletion to the extent that they are not represented by physical property, and through depreciation to the extent that they are represented by physical property.

(e) *Effect of option and election.* This section does not grant a new option under paragraph (a) of this section or new election under paragraph (b) of this section. Section 3 of the Act of October 23, 1962 (Public Law 87-863, 76 Stat. 1142) granted any taxpayer who had exercised an option to capitalize intangible drilling and development costs under Regulations 111, §29.23(m)-16 (1939 Code) or Regulations 118, §39.23(m)-16 (1939 Code) a new option for the first taxable year ending after October 22, 1962, to deduct such costs as expenses. Unless he has exercised the new option granted by such Act, any taxpayer who exercised an option or made an election under the regulations described in the preceding sentence is, by such option or election, bound with respect to all intangible drilling and development costs (whether made before January 1, 1954, or after December 31, 1953) in connection with oil and gas properties. See section 7807(b)(2). Any taxpayer who has not made intangible drilling and development expenditures in any taxable year beginning after December 31, 1942, prior to his first taxable year beginning after December 31, 1953, and ending after August 16, 1954,

must exercise the option granted in paragraph (a) of this section in the return for the first taxable year in which the taxpayer pays or incurs such expenditures. If such return is required by law (including extensions thereof) to be filed before November 1, 1965, the option under paragraph (a) of this section, or the election under paragraph (b) of this section, may be exercised or changed not later than November 1, 1965. The exercise of or change in such option or election shall be effective with respect to the earliest taxable year to which the option or election is applicable in respect of which assessment of a deficiency or credit or refund of an overpayment, as the case may be, resulting from such exercise or change is not prevented by any law or rule of law on the date such option is exercised or such election is made. Any such option or election shall be binding upon the taxpayer for the first taxable year for which it is effective and for all subsequent taxable years.

[T.D. 6836, 30 FR 8902, July 15, 1965]

**§ 1.612-5 Charges to capital and to expense in case of geothermal wells.**

(a) *Option with respect to intangible drilling and development costs.* In accordance with the provisions of section 263(c), intangible drilling and development costs incurred by an operator (one who holds a working or operating interest in any tract or parcel of land either as a fee owner or under a lease or any other form of contract granting working or operating rights) in the development of a geothermal deposit (as defined in section 613(e)(3) and the regulations thereunder) may at the operator's option be chargeable to capital or to expense. This option applies to all expenditures made by an operator for wages, fuel, repairs, hauling, supplies, etc., incident to and necessary for the drilling of wells and the preparation of wells for the production of geothermal steam or hot water. Such expenditures have for convenience been termed intangible drilling and development costs. They include the cost to operators of any drilling or development work (excluding amounts payable only out of production or gross or net proceeds from production, if such amounts are depletable income to the recipient,

and amounts properly allocable to cost of depreciable property) done for them by contractors under any form of contract, including turnkey contracts. Examples of items to which this option applies are all amounts paid for labor, fuel, repairs, hauling, and supplies, or any of them, which are used:

(1) In the drilling, shooting, and cleaning of wells,

(2) In such clearing of ground, draining, road making, surveying, and geological work as are necessary in preparation for the drilling of wells, and

(3) In the construction of such derricks, tanks, pipelines, and other physical structures as are necessary for the drilling of wells and the preparation of wells for the production of geothermal steam or hot water.

In general, this option applies only to expenditures for those drilling and developing items which in themselves do *not* have a salvage value. For the purpose of *this* option, labor, fuel, repairs, hauling, supplies, etc. are not considered as having a salvage value, even though used in connection with the installation of physical property which has a salvage value. Included in this option are all costs of drilling and development undertaken (directly or through a contract) by an operator of a geothermal property whether incurred by the operator prior or subsequent to the formal grant or assignment of operating rights (a leasehold interest, or other form of operating rights, or working interest); except that in any case where any drilling or development project is undertaken for the grant or assignment of a fraction of the operating rights, only that part of the costs thereof which is attributable to such fractional interest is within this option. In the excepted cases, costs of the project undertaken, including depreciable equipment furnished, to the extent allocable to fractions of the operating rights held by others, must be capitalized as the depletable capital cost of the fractional interest thus acquired.

(b) *Recovery of optional items, if capitalized.* (1) Items recoverable through depletion: If the taxpayer charges such expenditures as fall within the option to capital account, the amounts so capitalized and not deducted as a loss are

recoverable through depletion insofar as they are not represented by physical property. For the purposes of this section the expenditures for clearing ground, draining, road making, surveying, geological work, excavation, grading, and the drilling, shooting, and cleaning of wells, are considered not to be represented by physical property, and when charged to capital account are recoverable through depletion.

(2) Items recoverable through depreciation: If the taxpayer charges such expenditures as fall within the option to capital account, the amounts so capitalized and not deducted as a loss are recoverable through depreciation insofar as they are represented by physical property. Such expenditures are amounts paid for wages, fuel, repairs, hauling, supplies, etc. used in the installation of casing and equipment and in the construction on the property of derricks and other physical structures.

(3) In the case of capitalized intangible drilling and development costs incurred under a contract, such costs shall be allocated between the foregoing classes of items specified in paragraphs (b)(1) and (2) of this section for the purpose of determining the depletion and depreciation allowances.

(4) Option with respect to cost of nonproductive wells: If the operator has elected to capitalize intangible drilling and development costs; then an additional option is accorded with respect to intangible drilling and development costs incurred in drilling a nonproductive well. Such costs incurred in drilling a nonproductive well may be deducted by the taxpayer as an ordinary loss provided a proper election is made in the taxpayer's original or amended return for the first taxable year ending on or after October 1, 1978, in which such a nonproductive well is completed. The taxpayer must make a clear statement of election under this option in the return or amended return. The election may be revoked by the filing of an amended return that does not contain such a statement. The absence of a clear indication in such return of an election to deduct as ordinary losses intangible drilling and development costs of nonproductive wells shall be deemed to be an election to recover such costs through depletion to

the extent that they are not represented by physical property, and through depreciation to the extent that they are represented by physical property. Upon the expiration of the time for filing a claim for credit or refund of any overpayment of tax imposed by chapter 1 of the Code with respect to the first taxable year ending on or after October 1, 1978 in which a nonproductive well is completed, the taxpayer is bound for all subsequent years by his exercise of the option to deduct intangible drilling and development costs of nonproductive wells as an ordinary loss or his deemed election to recover such costs through depletion or depreciation.

(c) *Nonoptional items distinguished—(1) Capital Items:* The option with respect to intangible drilling and development costs does not apply to expenditures by which the taxpayer acquires tangible property ordinarily considered as having a salvage value. Examples of such items are the costs of the actual materials in those structures which are constructed in the wells and on the property, and the cost of drilling tools, pipe, casing, tubing, tanks, engines, boilers, machines, etc. The option does not apply to any expenditure for wages, fuel, repairs, hauling, supplies, etc., in connection with equipment, facilities, or structures, not incident to or necessary for the drilling of wells, such as structures for treating geothermal steam or hot water. These are capital items and are recoverable through depreciation.

(2) *Expense items:* Expenditures which must be charged off as expense, regardless of the option provided by this section, are those for labor, fuel, repairs, hauling, supplies, etc., in connection with the operation of the wells and of other facilities on the property for the production of geothermal steam or hot water.

(d) *Manner of making election.* The option granted in paragraph (a) of this section to charge intangible drilling and development costs to expense may be exercised by claiming intangible drilling and development costs as a deduction on the taxpayer's original or amended return for the first taxable year ending on or after October 1, 1978, in which the taxpayer pays or incurs

such costs with respect to a geothermal well commenced on or after that date. No formal statement is necessary. The exercise of the option may be revoked by the filing of an amended return that does not claim such a deduction. If the taxpayer fails to deduct such costs as expenses in any such return, he shall be deemed to have elected to recover such costs through depletion to the extent that they are not represented by physical property, and through depreciation to the extent that they are represented by physical property. Upon the expiration of the time for filing a claim for credit or refund of any overpayment of tax imposed by chapter 1 of the Code with respect to the first taxable year ending on or after October 1, 1978, in which the taxpayer pays or incurs intangible drilling and development costs with respect to a geothermal well commenced on or after that date, the taxpayer is bound by his exercise of the option to charge such costs to expense or his deemed election to recover such costs through depletion or depreciation for that year and for all subsequent years.

(e) *Effective date.* The option granted by paragraph (a) of this section is available only for taxable years ending on or after October 1, 1978, with respect to geothermal wells commenced on or after that date.

(Secs. 263, 9805, Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (92 Stat. 3201, 26 U.S.C. 362; 68A Stat. 917, 26 U.S.C. 7805))

[T.D. 7806, 47 FR 4061, Jan. 28, 1982]

#### § 1.613-1 Percentage depletion; general rule.

(a) *In general.* In the case of a taxpayer computing the deduction for depletion under section 611 with respect to minerals on the basis of a percentage of gross income from the property, as defined in section 613(c) and §§ 1.613-3 and 1.613-4, the deduction shall be the percentage of the gross income as specified in section 613(b) and § 1.613-2. The deduction shall not exceed 50 percent (100 percent in the case of oil and gas properties for taxable years beginning after December 31, 1990) of the taxpayer's taxable income from the property (computed without regard to the allowance for depletion). The taxable