

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

NTL No. 2010-P04

Effective Date: February 24, 2010
Expiration Date: February 23, 2015

**NOTICE TO LESSEES AND OPERATORS OF FEDERAL OIL AND GAS LEASES
IN THE PACIFIC OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF REGION**

Warning Signs: Pipelines and Power Cables

This Notice to Lessees and Operators (NTL) supersedes NTL No. 92-01.

In March 1991, an oil pipeline in the Minerals Management Service (MMS) Pacific OCS Region (POCSR) was damaged by an operator's workboat dragging a grappling hook to try to retrieve a mooring buoy anchor and its chain. Following investigation of this incident, the MMS POCSR issued a Safety Alert on May 15, 1991, "Pipeline Damaged by Grappling Hook" (<http://www.mms.gov/omm/pacific/offshore/safety/safetyalert06-May1991.htm>). Less than a month later, there was a very similar incident -- another pipeline was damaged by a grapnel/anchor while personnel on a workboat were trying to locate a loose mooring buoy anchor and its chain. Both incidents involved oil spills and resulted in civil penalties.

The accident investigation results for the second incident included a number of preventative recommendations, including requiring sign(s) on platforms to highlight the presence of pipelines/power cables and show where they come up on the platforms. The original NTL, 92-01, was issued on March 24, 1992, and signs were installed on all of the platforms within a few months. There have been no similar incidents since that time.

The MMS regulation at 30 CFR 250.107(a)(1) states, "What must I do to protect health, safety, property, and the environment?, (a) You must protect health, safety, property, and the environment by: (1) Performing all operations in a safe and workmanlike manner." We ask that you continue to avoid dredging and using anchors in the vicinity of pipelines and power cables, and that you continue to display and properly maintain the warning signs on your platforms, to help ensure safe and workmanlike operations by your workboat crews.

The following sign criteria were included in the original NTL and remain in effect:

Pipelines and power cables shall be identified with warning signs on each platform. The signs shall use letters not less than 10 inches in height, and the letters shall be black on a white background. Signs shall be (a) affixed at locations that are close to the points where the pipelines/cables enter the ocean or where the pipelines/cables leave the platform's boundaries and (b) legible to approaching boat traffic. The signs shall contain the following language and information and be maintained in a legible condition:

1. "WARNING:"
2. "SEAFLOOR PIPELINES AND/OR POWER CABLES"
(whichever is appropriate)
3. "DO NOT DREDGE OR ANCHOR"

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 a regulatory requirement that provides a clear and consistent approach to complying with that requirement. 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

This NTL does not impose information collection requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

Contact

If you have any questions or need clarification regarding this NTL, please contact the California District Manager at (805) 389-7560.



Ellen G. Aronson
Regional Director
Pacific OCS Region



Date