



West Virginia's
Surface Owners' Rights Organization
1500 Dixie Street, Charleston, West Virginia 25311
Voice/VoiceMail 304-346-5891 • Fax 304-346-8981
www.wvsoro.org

**Use the Funds from Oil and Gas Operator Bond Forfeitures
First to Take Care of the Problem That Caused The Forfeiture
On the Land where the Problem Occurred.**

There is an "Oil and Gas Reclamation Fund" that in theory is supposed to be used to plug the thousands and thousands of oil and gas wells that have been orphaned over the last century by oil and gas drillers who go out of business without plugging them. In reality, from 2010 to 2014 there was only enough money in the fund to plug just 6 orphaned wells!

Money goes into that fund from two sources. First, a fee that new drillers have to pay for permits goes into the fund. It is not much. Second, money also goes into the fund when the DEP forfeits the bond of a driller who has not plugged a well it is supposed to or had some other problem. That does not happen much either, just three times between 2010 and 2014.

Under the current statute and rule, the DEP keeps a list that ranks the orphaned wells according to how much of a problem they are, and the DEP has to plug them in that order. This is not generally a bad way to prioritize the limited amount of money available to plug the thousands and thousands of orphaned wells in West Virginia.

However, when a landowner goes to all the effort to get the DEP to forfeit a bond because of a problem well on their land, we believe that when money does go into the fund from forfeited bond money, that money should go first to deal with the well or wells on a landowner's land that caused the bond to be forfeited.

Support the House Bill ____ or Senate Bill ____





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