



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6
1201 ELM STREET, SUITE 500
DALLAS, TEXAS 75270-2102

December 1, 2022

TRANSMITTED VIA E-MAIL

Mr. Steve Sewell
Hard Rock Operating, LLC
1522 Grandview Avenue
Pawhuska, OK 74056
steve@hardrockop.com

Re: Final Administrative Order
Well Number: 4
EPA Inventory ID: OS5904000
Docket Number: SDWA-06-2022-1119

Dear Mr. Sewell:

Attached is a Final Administrative Order (Final Order) issued by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to Hard Rock Operating, LLC (Respondent) for violation of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The Final Order requires the Respondent to comply with the regulatory requirements specified in the Final Order. EPA requests that the Respondent immediately confirm receipt of this e-mail and the attached Final Order by a response e-mail to rudolph.matthew@epa.gov.

The violation of the SDWA was identified through a review of files that EPA maintains on the referenced injection well. The violation is for failing to successfully demonstrate mechanical integrity and maintaining the injection well in a manner that could allow the movement of fluid that contains contaminants into an underground source of drinking water (USDW). The Final Order does not assess a monetary penalty; however, it does require compliance with SDWA requirements and specifies deadlines for compliance. The Final Order requires the Respondent to comply with certain SDWA regulatory requirements. Please be aware that failure to comply with the Final Order may subject the Respondent to additional enforcement action by EPA, including the initiation of legal proceedings to seek monetary penalties. The effective date of the Final Order is thirty (30) days after issuance unless an appeal is taken pursuant to Section 1423(c)(6) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300h-2(c)(6).

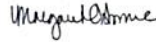
The SDWA provides that you may file an appeal of the Final Order with the United States District Court for the District of Columbia or the district in which the violations occurred. Such appeal must be filed within 30 days after the Final Order is issued. If you file an appeal, you must simultaneously send a copy of the appeal by certified mail to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and to the United States Attorney General.

Also enclosed is an "Information Sheet" relating to the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act and a "Notice of Registrant's Duty to Disclose" relating to the disclosure of environmental legal proceedings to the Securities and Exchange Commission. The EPA is committed to ensuring compliance

with the requirements of the Underground Injection Control program, and my staff will assist you in any way possible.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Matthew Rudolph at (214) 665-6434.

Sincerely,



Digitally signed by
MARGARET
OSBOURNE
Date: 2022.12.01
13:49:18 -06'00'

Cheryl T. Seager, Director
Enforcement and
Compliance Assurance Division

Attachments

ec: Mr. Craig Walker, Osage Nation, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Environmental
Supervisor
cmwalker@osagenation-nsn.gov

Mr. Richard Winlock, BIA Osage Agency Acting Superintendent
richard.winlock@bia.gov

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 6
Dallas, Texas 75270

FILED

22 DEC -7 AM 10: 26

In the Matter of

Hard Rock Operating, LLC

Respondent.

§
§
§
§
§

REGIONAL HEARING CLERK
EPA REGION VI

Docket No. SDWA-06-2022-1119

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The following findings are made, and Final Administrative Order issued, under the authority vested in the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by Section 1423(c) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (the Act), 42 U.S.C. § 300h-2(c). The authority to issue this Final Administrative Order has been delegated by the Administrator to the Regional Administrator of EPA Region 6 who further delegated such authority to the Director of the Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division. The EPA has primary enforcement responsibility for underground injection within the meaning of Section 1422(c) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300h-1(c), to ensure that owners or operators of Class II injection wells within Osage County, Oklahoma, comply with the requirements of the Act.

FINDINGS

1. Hard Rock Operating, LLC (Respondent) is a company doing business in the State of Oklahoma and, therefore, is a "person," within the meaning of Section 1401(12) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300f(12).
2. At all times relevant to the violations alleged herein, Respondent owned or operated an "injection well" which is a "Class II well" as those terms are defined at 40 C.F.R § 147.2902. The injection well is located in the SW Quarter of Section 27, Township 29 North, Range 10 East, Osage County, Oklahoma, designated as injection Well No. 4 and EPA Inventory Number OS5904000 (the injection well).

3. Respondent is subject to underground injection control (UIC) program requirements set forth at 40 C.F.R. Part 147, Subpart GGG, which are authorized under Section 1421 of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300h.
4. Regulations at 40 C.F.R. § 147.2903(a) require that any underground injection is prohibited except as authorized by rule or authorized by a permit issued under the UIC program. The construction or operation of any injection well required to have a permit is prohibited until the permit has been issued. The term “permit” is defined at 40 C.F.R. § 147.2902.
5. Regulations at 40 C.F.R. § 147.2903(b) provide that no owner or operator shall construct, operate, maintain, convert, plug, or abandon any injection well, or conduct any other injection activity, in a manner that allows the movement of fluid containing any contaminant into underground sources of drinking water (USDW), if the presence of that contaminant may cause the violation of any primary drinking water regulation under 40 C.F.R. Part 142 or may otherwise adversely affect the health of persons.
6. Regulations at 40 C.F.R. § 147.2916 require the owner or operator of a new Class II injection well, or any other Class II injection well required to have a permit in the Osage Mineral Reserve, to comply with the requirements of 40 C.F.R. §§ 147.2903, 147.2907, and 147.2918 through 147.2928.
7. On July 26, 2000, EPA issued UIC permit number 06S1261P5904 (the permit) for the injection well.
8. On July 26, 2000, the permit became effective.
9. Regulations at 40 C.F.R. § 147.2925(a) require the permittee to comply with all permit conditions, except as authorized by an emergency permit (described at 40 C.F.R. § 147.2906).
10. Regulations at 40 C.F.R. § 147.2920(b) and Part I.B. of the UIC permit require that the injection well have mechanical integrity and demonstrate mechanical integrity every 5 years.

11. On June 25, 2019, the injection well was due for a mechanical integrity test and Respondent failed to conduct it. To date, the injection well has not successfully demonstrated mechanical integrity.

12. On April 3, 2020, EPA emailed a letter to Respondent notifying Respondent that EPA determined that the injection well was overdue for a mechanical integrity test. The letter informed Respondent of the potential violations of the Act and the UIC program and that EPA can pursue enforcement actions in response to these violations. The letter also provided the Respondent an opportunity to confer with EPA in regard to this matter.

13. Therefore, Respondent violated regulations set forth at 40 C.F.R. §§ 147.2903(b), 147.2920(b) and Part I.B. of the permit by maintaining the injection well in a manner that could allow the movement of fluid that contains contaminants into an USDW and by failing to successfully demonstrate mechanical integrity.

14. Pursuant to Section 1423(c)(3)(A) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300h-2(c)(3)(A), on September 15, 2022, EPA issued a Proposed Administrative Order to Respondent and provided Respondent an opportunity to request a hearing on the Proposed Administrative Order.

15. On September 16, 2022, EPA provided public notice of its proposal to issue an order for compliance in this matter in accordance with Section 1423(c)(3)(B) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300h-2(c)(3)(B).

16. Respondent did not request a hearing and EPA did not receive any public comments on the Proposed Administrative Order.

SECTION 1423(c) COMPLIANCE ORDER

17. Based on the foregoing findings, and pursuant to the authority of Section 1423(c) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300h-2(c), EPA Region 6 hereby orders Respondent to:

- a. Cease use of the injection well for the unauthorized underground injection of fluids,
and
- b. Take one of the following actions:
 - i. Repair the injection well and successfully demonstrate mechanical integrity according to regulations at 40 C.F.R. § 147.2920 and Part I.B. of the permit within ninety (90) days after the effective date of this Final Administrative Order; or
 - ii. Complete proper plugging and abandonment in accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 147.2905, within ninety (90) days after the effective date of this Final Administrative Order; or
 - iii. Convert the injection well to production use within ninety (90) days after the effective date of this Final Administrative Order.

18. Submit copies of completed plugging reports or completed work reports showing conversion to production and BIA Osage Agency Forms 139 within 120 days after the effective date of this Final Administrative Order to:

Matthew Rudolph
rudolph.matthew@epa.gov
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Water Enforcement Branch (ECDWE)
1201 Elm Street, Suite 500
Dallas, TX 75270-2102

GENERAL PROVISIONS

19. Respondent may appeal this Final Administrative Order to Federal District Court pursuant to Section 1423(c)(6) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300h-2(c)(6).

20. This Final Administrative Order does not constitute a waiver, suspension, or modification of the requirements of 40 C.F.R. Parts 144, 146, and 147, Subpart GGG, which remain in full force and effect.

21. Issuance of this Final Administrative Order is not an election by EPA to forego any civil or criminal action otherwise authorized under the Act.

22. Violation of the terms of this Final Administrative Order after its effective date or date of final judgment as described in Section 1423(c)(6) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300h-2(c)(6), may subject Respondent to further enforcement action, including a civil action for enforcement of this Final Administrative Order under Section 1423(b) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300h-2(b), and civil and criminal penalties for violations of the compliance terms of this Final Administrative Order under Section 1423(b)(1) and (2) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300h-2(b)(1) and (2).

TAX IDENTIFICATION

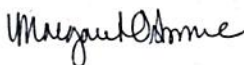
23. For purposes of the identification requirement in Section 162(f)(2)(A)(ii) of the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C. § 162(f)(2)(A)(ii), and 26 C.F.R. § 1.162-21(b)(2), performance of Paragraphs 17 and 18 is restitution, remediation, or required to come into compliance with the law.

EFFECTIVE DATE

24. This Final Administrative Order becomes effective thirty (30) days after issuance unless an appeal is taken pursuant to Section 1423(c)(6) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300h-2(c)(6).

December 1, 2022

Date



Digitally signed by MARGARET
OSBOURNE
Date: 2022.12.01 13:48:20
-06'00'

Cheryl T. Seager, Director
Enforcement and
Compliance Assurance Division

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that the foregoing Proposed Administrative Order was sent to the following persons, in the manner specified, on the date below:

Signed Original E-mailed: Regional Hearing Clerk (R6ORC)
U.S. EPA, Region 6
1201 Elm Street, Suite 500
Dallas, TX 75270
vaughn.lorena@epa.gov

File Stamped Copy
Transmitted via Email: Mr. Steve Sewell
Hard Rock Operating, LLC
1522 Grandview Avenue
Pawhuska, OK 74056
steve@hardrockop.com

Electronic Copy: Kristine Talbot
U.S. EPA, Region 6
1201 Elm Street, Suite 500
Dallas, TX 75270
talbot.kristine@epa.gov

Richard Winlock, Superintendent
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Osage Agency
P.O. Box 1539
Pawhuska, OK 74056
richard.winlock@bia.gov

Mr. Craig Walker, Environmental Supervisor
Osage Nation, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
100 W. Main, Suite 304
Pawhuska, OK 74056
cmwalker@osagenation-nsn.gov

Dated: 12/6/2022_____

Signed MATTHEW Digitally signed by
MATTHEW RUDOLPH
Date: 2022.12.06
13:46:14 -06'00'
RUDOLPH