Well Permitting Requirements and Process
Oil and Gas Conservation Division

I) Before or concurrent with filing Application for Permit to Drill

1) Organization report
2) Plugging and restoration bond
3) Notice of intent to drill published in Helena newspaper and paper in general circulation in the county (for wells outside of delineated fields)

II) Permit Application

1) Completeness review
   a) survey plat
   b) description of blow-out prevention equipment
   c) wells in areas with H2S gas might require H2S contingency plan
   d) topographic map (access routes, residences, water wells)
   e) well site diagram
   f) type of drilling fluid
   g) reserve pit sketch (dimensions, freeboard, berms)
   h) reserve pit liner description
   i) plan for treatment or disposal of reserve pit solids and liquids
   j) identification of other agency permits that might be required
   k) verification / confirmation of public notice (I.3)

2) Technical review
   a) determine compliance with applicable spacing, well location or special field rules.
   b) casing program review
      i) adequate surface casing to protect underground sources of drinking water (USDW's) including any water wells identified on the permit application or the GWIC database.
      ii) adequate coverage of deeper critical zones
   c) require or not require well cuttings to be submitted

III) Additional Requirements for Class II Injection wells

1) Underground Injection Control (UIC) bond
2) Complete and approved injection permit package
3) Public hearing scheduled consistent with a 30-day notice requirement under UIC rules
4) Additional construction and siting requirements under UIC program such as required levels of protection for USDW's, and area of review analysis
5) EPA-approved aquifer exemption for receiving zones of less than 10,000 milligrams per liter (mg/l) total dissolved solids (TDS) required prior to injection

IV) Environmental Assessment

1) Analysis Categories Include (with examples):

Air Quality (deep drilling, high horsepower, proximity to Class I air quality area, presence of hydrogen sulfide (H2S) gas)

Water Quality (salt- or oil-based mud system, proximity to drainages, soil makeup, high water table or irrigated cropland)

Soils, Vegetation, and Land Use (stream crossings, erosion potential, loss of productivity, damage to existing improvements)

Health Hazards / Noise (blow-out potential, excessive noise, presence of H2S)

Wildlife/Recreation (proximity to sensitive wildlife areas, new access creation, threatened or endangered species)

Historical/Cultural/Paleonotological (proximity to known sites, land ownership)

Social/Economic (effect on tax base, creation of demand for government services, population impacts)

2) Mitigation measures may be included as permit stipulations.

V) Administrative Permit Rejection

1) Permit applications may be referred to the board, or applicant may have the opportunity to withdraw or modify the application.

VI) Permit Approval

1) If application is subject to the published notice requirement and 10 days have passed the permit may be approved with any stipulations that may result from either the technical or environmental review.

2) Permits not subject to 10-day notice requirement can be approved upon completion of completeness, technical, and environmental review.

3) If there is a request for the permit application to be heard it will be scheduled for the board's next available hearing date in accordance with A.R.M 36.22.601.