

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6335

BILL NUMBER: SB 71

NOTE PREPARED: Dec 8, 2010

BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: Coal Bed Methane and Other Oil and Gas Issues.

FIRST AUTHOR: Sen. Gard

FIRST SPONSOR:

BILL STATUS: As Introduced

FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 X DEDICATED
 FEDERAL

IMPACT: State

Summary of Legislation: *Emergency Rules.* This bill allows the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to adopt emergency rules for most aspects of oil and gas and other petroleum regulation.

Regulation of Coal Bed Methane Wells. The bill requires the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to regulate various aspects of coal bed methane wells. It provides for regulation of coal bed methane wells and other gas wells in a similar manner. The bill terminates the restriction on the extraction of coal bed methane from a well for oil and gas purposes. The bill provides that oil and gas statutes do not apply to methane ventilation governed under an approved federal Mine Safety and Health Administration coal mine ventilation plan.

Division of Oil and Gas. The bill requires the DNR Division to give notice to interested persons of applications for coal bed methane permits, prohibits issuance of a permit less than 30 days after the posting, and establishes other permit issuance criteria. It allows the Division to require an owner or operator to modify the location for the drilling of a well for oil and gas purposes, and requires an owner or operator to provide notice of the intent to drill under certain circumstances.

The bill establishes coal seam protection requirements with respect to producing oil and gas wells. It adjusts the requirements for plugging wells. It allows an owner or operator of a coal mine to burn by flares coal bed methane under certain circumstances.

The bill limits the exercise of rights in certain circumstances under a coal bed methane estate if the exercise affects miner safety or coal resources. The bill establishes relative rights between a coal estate in land and a coal bed methane estate in land.

Repeals. The bill repeals provisions concerning requirements for coal seam protection and for plugging of wells.

Effective Date: July 1, 2011.

Explanation of State Expenditures: The bill will require the adoption of rules and posting of information on the DNR website. The Division must maintain a list of certain interested parties and give written notice of each complete permit application to each party on the list. The division may not issue a permit until it follows certain guidelines.

The bill's requirements are within the DNR's routine administrative functions and should be able to be implemented with no additional appropriations, assuming near customary agency staffing and resource levels.

Background. The Division of Oil & Gas does not receive funding from the state General Fund, but is funded by a dedicated fund and federal funds. The dedicated fund--the Oil & Gas Fund--receives 70% to 80% of its revenue from the Petroleum Severance Tax. Other sources of revenue for the fund include permit fees assessed when applying for a permit to drill for oil and/or gas. The Division operates on a budget of approximately \$1.3 M.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures:

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: DNR.

Local Agencies Affected:

Information Sources: Chris Smith, DNR.

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