



Texas Landowners Face Challenges from Low-Producing Oil Wells

Description

In Tom Green County, Texas, some oil wells produce significant amounts of oil daily, while others produce very little. Jackie Chesnutt, a retired engineer, claims the five wells on her ranch are not meeting state regulations and should be shut down. The company operating these wells, CORE Petro, argues that it is struggling financially and insists all its wells are compliant with regulations.

Texas has around 99,000 active oil wells, with about two-thirds producing fewer than 10 barrels a day. To remain operational, a well must produce at least five barrels for three consecutive months or one barrel for 12 months. Companies often choose to maintain minimal production instead of spending substantial sums on well closure, a practice that impacts landowners like Chesnutt, who are concerned about pollution and visual clutter.

Industry analysts suggest that some companies may underreport production to avoid the costs associated with plugging wells. Environmental advocates are calling for stricter regulations to ensure timely well closures and avoid downloading costs onto the state.

Chesnutt has documented pollution from the wells and raised complaints with the Railroad Commission, which oversees the oil industry. However, she feels her concerns have been largely ignored, and her frustrations have led to confrontations with company staff. The commission has not penalised CORE Petro.

The issue highlights a larger problem in Texas, where thousands of low-producing wells continue to exist, creating potential environmental risks. Chesnutt remains determined to hold the company accountable and is concerned about the future of her property. Further developments in regulations and the financial stability of operators like CORE Petro will significantly impact the resolution of these matters.

Vocabulary List:

1. **regulations** //ˌrɛɡjəˈleɪʃənz// (noun): official rules made by government or authorities
2. **compliant** //kəmˈplaɪənt// (adjective): following rules or what is required
3. **underreport** //ˌʌndəˈrɪːpɔːt// (verb): to give a lower number than actual
4. **pollution** //pəˈluʃən// (noun): dirty or harmful materials in air or water
5. **advocates** //ˈædvəkəts// (noun): people who publicly support an idea
6. **operational** //ˌɒpəˈreɪʃənəl// (adjective): working and able to be used

Comprehension Questions



Multiple Choice

1. How many active oil wells are there in Texas?
Option: 50,000
Option: 75,000
Option: 99,000
Option: 120,000

2. What is the minimum production required for a well to remain operational for three consecutive months?
Option: One barrel
Option: Five barrels
Option: Ten barrels
Option: Twenty barrels

3. What company operates the wells on Jackie Chesnutt's ranch?
Option: CORE Petro
Option: Texaco
Option: Exxon Mobil
Option: Chevron

4. What are some concerns that Jackie Chesnutt has regarding the wells?
Option: Noise pollution and traffic
Option: Visual clutter and pollution
Option: Loss of property value
Option: Water contamination

5. Which organization oversees the oil industry in Texas?
Option: Environmental Protection Agency
Option: Railroad Commission
Option: Texas Oil and Gas Association
Option: Department of Natural Resources

6. What do environmental advocates want regarding oil wells?
Option: More oil production
Option: Stricter regulations
Option: Closure of all oil wells
Option: Less oversight



True-False

7. Jackie Chesnutt is pleased with CORE Petro's management of the oil wells.
8. Two-thirds of the oil wells in Texas produce fewer than 10 barrels a day.
9. CORE Petro has been penalised by the Railroad Commission.
10. Companies often choose to close wells instead of maintaining minimal production.
11. Jackie Chesnutt has documented pollution and raised complaints with the Railroad Commission.
12. The financial stability of operators like CORE Petro is irrelevant to the resolution of the issues.

Gap-Fill

13. A well must produce at least _____ barrels for three consecutive months to remain operational.
14. Approximately two-thirds of Texas oil wells produce fewer than _____ barrels a day.
15. Jackie Chesnutt claims that the five wells on her ranch are not meeting state _____ and should be shut down.
16. Environmental advocates are calling for stricter _____ to ensure timely well closures.
17. The Railroad Commission oversees the _____ industry in Texas.
18. Chesnutt has raised complaints regarding _____ from the wells.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. 99,000 2. Five barrels 3. CORE Petro 4. Visual clutter and pollution 5. Railroad Commission 6. Stricter regulations

True-False: 7. False 8. True 9. False 10. False 11. True 12. False

Gap-Fill: 13. five 14. ten 15. regulations 17. oil 18. pollution

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