

Modernizing Oil & Gas Bonding & Cleanup Rules: A Fair Fix for Jobs, Health & New Mexico's Future

The Problem: A Legacy of Abandoned Wells Pollution, An Unfair Bill for the Public




Oil and gas corporations have made billions drilling in New Mexico. When the wells stop producing, too many companies walk away—leaving aging, leaking infrastructure behind. These abandoned wells can leak toxins into our air and water, harm our health, and cost the public millions in cleanup.

Right now, corporations are only required to set aside a tiny fraction of the money it actually takes to safely plug and clean up their wells. That means New Mexicans are left holding the bill—and the risk.

We can fix this with common-sense rules that ensure:

- If you drill it, you clean it,
- Our land, water, and families are protected, and
- Communities get good-paying jobs cleaning up the mess.

What's at Stake: Health, Jobs & Accountability

 Protecting Our Water & Health	 Creating Good Jobs	 Taxpayer Protection
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Leaking wells release methane and toxins like benzene and hydrogen sulfide.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Cleanup is necessary—and an opportunity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ NM taxpayers face a \$700M–\$1.6B cleanup bill.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 90% of New Mexicans rely on groundwater for their drinking water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ A 2021 study shows cleanup of private/state wells could:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Inject \$8.2B into the state economy.◦ Create nearly 22,000 jobs for 3 years.◦ Pay \$4.1B in wages and benefits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Companies can currently bond as little as: \$105 per well or \$250,000 statewide operations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Pollution spreads even after wells are abandoned.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Actual cleanup costs average \$163,000 per well.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 700+ wells are already flagged for publicly-funded plugging.

The Fair Fix: Update the Rules So Polluters Pay

New Mexicans believe in fairness: If you make a mess, you clean it up. But outdated bonding rules let oil and gas corporations drill now and skip out on cleanup later.

We're working together—community members, environmental and social justice organizations, concerned residents, independent experts in oil and gas operations and abandoned wells—to change that.

A new proposal to the Oil Conservation Commission would:

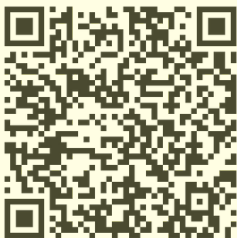
- ▶ **Modernize bonding rules to \$150,000 per inactive or high-risk well**
- ▶ **Require bonds for every well from operators with 15%+ idle wells to reduce financial risk**
- ▶ **Prevent operators who can't afford to plug wells or operators who have a record of not following the rules from inheriting wells**
- ▶ **Limit "temporary abandonment" at 8 years to end the abandonment loophole**

Take Action:

We have a chance to update outdated rules and send a strong message: If they drill it, they clean it. 100% of the time.

Your voice can make all the difference! Join our campaign to fix the bonding and cleanup rules so the oil and gas corporations who make the mess are the ones who clean it up—not the public.

Support stronger bonding & clean up rules.



Sign the petition today!

Tell the Oil Conservation Commission:

If they drill it, they clean it. Save the date for your chance to have your voice heard at public hearings Oct. 20–Nov. 7!

Learn more about our proposal at: <https://bit.ly/keepnmenchanting>