



UNITED STATES
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION VIII
999 18th STREET - SUITE 300

SUBJECT: GROUND WATER SECTION GUIDANCE NO. 37
Demonstrating Part II (external) Mechanical Integrity
for a Class II injection well permit.

FROM: Tom Pike, Chief
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TO: All Section Staff
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During the review for a Class II injection well permit, consideration must be given to the mechanical integrity (MI) of the well. MI demonstrates that the well is in sound condition and that the well is constructed in a manner that prevents injected fluids from entering any formation other than the authorized injection formation.

A demonstration of MI is a two part process:

PART I - **INTERNAL MECHANICAL INTEGRITY** is an assurance that there are no significant leaks in the casing/tubing/packer system.

PART II - **EXTERNAL MECHANICAL INTEGRITY** demonstrates that after fluid is injected into the formation, the injected fluids will not migrate out of the authorized injection interval through vertical channels adjacent to the wellbore.

A Class II injection well may demonstrate Part II MI by showing that injected fluids remain within the authorized injection interval. This may be accomplished as follows:

- 1) Cement bond log showing 80% bond through the an appropriate interval (Section Guidance 34),
- 2) Radioactive tracer survey conducted according to a EPA-approved procedure, or
- 3) Temperature survey conducted according to a EPA-approved procedure (Section Guidance 38).

For each test option above, the operator of the injection well should submit a plan for conducting the test. The plan will then be approved (or modified and approved) by EPA. EPA's pre-approval of the testing method will assure the operator that the

test is conducted consistent with current EPA guidance, and that the test will provide meaningful results.

Part II MI may be demonstrated either before or after issuing the Final Permit. However, if Part II is to be demonstrated after the Final Permit is issued, a provision in the permit will require the demonstration of Part II MI. The well will also be required to pass Part II MI prior to granting authorization to inject.

Radioactive tracer surveys and temperature surveys require that the well be allowed to inject fluids as part of the procedure. In these cases, a well that has shown no other demonstration of Part II MI will be allowed to inject only that volume of fluid that is necessary to conduct the appropriate test.

After the results of the test proves that the well has passed Part II MI, the well will be given authorization to begin full injection operations.

If any of the tests show a lack of Part II MI, the well will be repaired and retested, or plugged (See Headquarters Guidance #76).

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