

October 30, 2020

New Vent Stack Being Installed

The Orphan Well Association (OWA) will be installing a new vent stack at the wellsite located in the playground in the Brennan area. As mentioned in the last update, the Methane Interception Operation conducted in September successfully re-directed methane to come up through the wellbore. Initial monitoring suggested that a taller vent stack is needed in order to properly vent the methane being gathered. Installation of the new vent stack will start November 3rd and take about six days.

The new vent stack will be six metres tall – about twice the height of the current stack. A five metre high metal structure will be constructed to support the new stack. A hydrovac unit will be used to dig a hole for a cement base for the vent structure. This hydrovac unit, about the size of a garbage truck, will dig the hole by saturating the soil with water and then “vacuuming” the soil into the truck.

Like many types of large equipment, the hydrovac unit will be noisy. However, the unit will be operated for a maximum of two hours. The unit will be brought on site the morning of Wednesday, November 4 and moved off site that same day.

On Thursday, November 5, a “zoom boom” unit will be used to lift the support structure and vent stack into place on the cement base. This boom unit is an industrial truck used to lift and move materials short heights. This unit will be brought on site in the morning and moved off site in the afternoon.

The well was shut-in shortly after the Methane Interception Operation was conducted. While still significantly lower than the rated pressure of the well equipment, pressure has built up in the well. Over a two-day period, Friday, November 6 and Saturday, November 7, the well will slowly be opened and the pressure safely reduced. Staff will be on site overnight to monitor the well.

Safety is a priority for the OWA. On-going air quality monitoring has been conducted and venting of the gas will be done well within the safe limits. To confirm the gas is well below these limits, additional ambient air monitoring equipment will be installed – both inside the fenced area and in the backyards of the nearest residents. The OWA will also be monitoring for gas coming to surface outside of the wellbore. This monitoring will continue for several months.

As in the past, efforts will be made to minimize any potential impact on the community. Activities on site will be limited to between 7:30 am and 6 pm. Equipment moves will be scheduled so they don't interfere with school bus pick-ups and drop-offs and vehicles will not be parked on the street. There are no plans to close the playground.

While crews are on site, modifications will be made to reduce the noise level from the temporary Active Methane Management System (AMMS). This is in response to concerns expressed by the community. Insulation will be added to the walls of the metal shed and around the pump. The new AMMS unit, scheduled to be constructed in the Spring of 2021, will be quieter and have a smaller footprint.

Questions? – If you have questions about this project; contact Dave Marks, Team Lead – Land, Stakeholder Relations, Support Services, with the OWA (403.297.8555).

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Future Newsletters – If you would like to receive future newsletters about this project by email, notify us at community@orphanwell.ca . Just provide your name and email address and indicate you want future updates by email. We will add you to our email list.