

across

# THE BOARD

November/December 2005

## Rolling on the river

**Sundre Petroleum Operators Group  
Community Affairs Meeting  
February 8, 2006  
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
West Country Center  
Sundre, Alberta**

The Sundre Petroleum Operators Group (SPOG) is an organization of representatives from the EUB and from 30 oil and gas companies and 15 community groups in the Sundre/Caroline area.

SPOG covers a 600-square-mile geographical area bounded by Hwy 54 to the north, Hwy 766 to the east, Hwy 582 to the south, and Ranges 7 and 8 to the west.

SPOG has working groups that deal with emergency response, environment, and community affairs. Community representatives and public members sit on various subcommittees to ensure that information is shared and problems are addressed.

### About the EUB

Our mission is to ensure that the discovery, development, and delivery of Alberta's energy resources and utilities services take place in a manner that is fair, responsible, and in the public interest. We regulate oil, natural gas, oil sands, coal, and electric energy, pipelines, and transmission line development.

On the utilities side, we regulate investor-owned natural gas, electric, and water utilities to ensure that customers receive safe and reliable service at just and reasonable rates. Regulation is done through two core functions: adjudication and regulation, information and knowledge.

Staff prepare booms for deployment in an EUB-regulated mock spill exercise on the Oldman River near Fort Macleod on October 20. All equipment and personnel that would normally respond to a spill incident into a waterway were involved in the exercise.

Under the EUB's emergency preparedness and response regulations, companies are required to participate in one spill exercise each year. The full equipment deployment on the Oldman River was conducted as though the incident was occurring. ■



## Recent EUB publications

### News Releases

**November 29** News Release (NR 2005-34) EUB Launches Customer Contact Centre

**November 28** News Release (NR 2005-33) EUB Clarifies Public Consultation Requirements for Compton Emergency Response Plan

**November 26** News Release (NR 2005-32) Westrock Energy Ltd. Sweet Gas Well Blowout Brought Under Control

**November 22** News Release (NR 2005-31) Alberta Response to Hurricane Results in Additional 15,000 Barrels per Day EUB to extend oil production measures to December 31, 2005

**November 10** News Release (NR 2005-30) EUB Releases Final Bitumen Conservation Decision

### Bulletins

**November 22** Bulletin 2005-32: Maximum Rate Limitations (MRL) Reinstated January 2006

**October 25** Safety Bulletin 2005-02: Downhole Explosion/Sour Gas Blowout

### Decisions

**December 6** Decision 2005-132: Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) Review and Variation of Customer Related POD Charge

**December 6** Decision 2005-131: Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) Refiling of 2005/2006 General Tariff Application per Decision 2005-096

**December 6** Decision 2005-130: Rider Resources Ltd., Applications for Well Licences, Pembina Field

**December 1** Decision 2005-134: Access Pipeline Inc. Application for a Pipeline Licence, Edmonton-Christina Lake

**December 1** Decision 2005-129: Ketch Resources Ltd. Review of Well Licence No. 0313083 and Application for Associated Battery and Pipeline

**November 29** Decision 2005-128: ATCO Pipelines Muskeg River Pipeline Application

**November 29** Decision 2005-127: AltaGas Utilities Inc. 2005/2006 General Rate Application – Phase I

**November 22** Decision 2005-120: AltaLink Management Ltd. Reconciliation of Direct Assigned Project Capital Deferral Accounts for the May 1, 2002 to April 30, 2004 Period

**November 22** Decision 2005-126: Bonterra Energy Corp. Application for a Pipeline Licence Pembina Field

**November 15** Decision 2005-125: Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) Interim Approval of Article 11 of AESO Terms and Conditions (Maximum TMR Compensation)

**November 15** Decision 2005-124: AltaLink Management Ltd. Inter-Affiliate Code of Conduct Compliance Plan

**November 18** Decision 2005-116: ConocoPhillips Canada Resources Corp. Application for a Pipeline Licence Gilby Field

**November 10** Decision 2005-122: Phase 3 Final Proceeding Under Bitumen Conservation Requirements in the Athabasca Wabiskaw-McMurray

**November 8** Decision 2005-123: Alberta Electric System Operator Employee Incentive Program

## EUB releases final bitumen conservation decision

On November 10, 2005, the EUB issued *Decision 2005-122*, which addresses the risk that natural gas production poses to the recovery of bitumen from the geological strata known as the Wabiskaw-McMurray in the Athabasca Oil Sands Area in northeast Alberta.

*Decision 2005-122* is the result of a public hearing held in Calgary from June 14 to August 12, 2005, where an EUB panel listened to all of the technical, geological, and other relevant evidence on the bitumen conservation matter. Two previous EUB hearings on bitumen conservation were held in 2004; those proceedings were interim hearings with a limited scope. Parties participating in this year's hearing were allowed to ask the Board to consider again the rulings the EUB made in the previous two interim decisions. In December, the EUB issued a report with detailed reasons for the rulings in *Decision 2005-122*.

The EUB believes that the production of certain natural gas in the Wabiskaw-McMurray, if allowed, would put bitumen recovery at risk. The EUB has found that as this gas is produced, it poses an unacceptable risk to bitumen recovery using thermal techniques, such as steam-assisted gravity drainage.

The Board had previously estimated that gas comprising about 7.9 billion cubic metres (280 billion cubic feet), or about 0.7 per cent of Alberta's remaining gas reserves – about 1.27 billion cubic metres (45 billion cubic feet), or 0.9 per cent of Alberta's annual natural gas production – was shut in following the 2004 interim hearings. *Decision 2005-122* rules that production from certain Wabiskaw-McMurray gas zones will not be allowed in 917 wells. This final decision represents no significant change from the gas estimated to be affected by the 2004 interim decisions.

The decision conserves about 4.05 billion cubic metres (25.5 billion barrels) of potentially recoverable Wabiskaw-McMurray bitumen that is in contact with the shut-in gas, which is about 14.6 per cent of Alberta's remaining bitumen reserves. The energy content of the bitumen reserves conserved through the decision is about 500 times larger than the energy content of the shut-in gas production. The decision reflects the EUB's mandate to ensure that Alberta's energy resources are conserved, not wasted.

Alberta's oil sands are a mixture of sand, clay, water, and bitumen. Bitumen is thick, heavy oil with the consistency of molasses and is contained within the spaces between sand grains in the oil sands. ■

## Alberta response to hurricane results in additional 2384 cubic meters of oil per day to U.S.

In response to Premier Ralph Klein's request for Alberta to increase the supply of oil on a temporary basis to help the United States during the crisis caused by Hurricane Katrina, the EUB took steps on September 2, 2005, that resulted in an additional 2384 cubic metres (15,000 barrels) of oil per day being produced by Alberta oil companies in September.

On November 22, 2005, the EUB determined that the Maximum Rate Limitations (MRL) suspension initiated in response to the hurricane would continue until December 31, 2005.

Following consultations with Alberta Minister of Energy Greg Melchin, the EUB temporarily suspended its Maximum Rate Limitations Orders on September 2, which allowed for an increase in oil production. An MRL Order is the maximum rate of oil production prescribed by the EUB to ensure conservation of an oil reservoir.

The EUB will reinstate its MRL Orders for January 1, 2006. ■



## EUB Customer Contact Centre now open

On September 26, 2005, the EUB opened its Customer Contact Centre (CCC) to provide easy access to the EUB for both public and industry inquiries and ensure prompt, professional, and knowledgeable service.

The CCC team works in conjunction with all branches of the EUB to provide excellent customer service. The CCC attempts to address as many calls as possible and forwards those it cannot directly respond to, such as complex technical questions or policy issues, to an appropriate EUB staff member.

The CCC also features an automated call distribution system, which monitors the volume of calls and response rate, as well as a hold queue for those times when all agents are busy and a follow-up process to ensure that calls are answered or returned.

To reach the CCC from the main EUB number (403) 297-8311, press "0". If you know the contact person or help line you need, you are encouraged to continue to contact them directly. If you are not getting a response or do not know whom to contact, the CCC will make every effort to assist you.

### 1) External Customers – Telephone

**Access:** dial (403) 297-8311.

External customers will have the options of choosing

- "0" for general inquiries and to reach the CCC
- "1" for the Facilities Applications Group help line (callers have additional choices within the Applications help line menu)
- "2" for Information Services
- "3" for Production/Well Data Services
- "4" for Utility Complaints (Edmonton)
- or spelling the name of the person they wish to speak with

### Field Centres

The EUB Field Surveillance Branch continues to provide 24-hour phone service to respond to complaints and incidents and day-to-day operational issues related to oil and gas production. For contact information, go to <[www.eub.gov.ab.ca/BBS/eubinfo/offices-field.htm](http://www.eub.gov.ab.ca/BBS/eubinfo/offices-field.htm)> on the Web or check page 4.

### Utilities

The Utilities Branch in Edmonton receives all inquiries and complaints related to utility rates and delivery of utility services to consumers. The Utilities telephone numbers are (780) 427-4901 for inquiries and (780) 427-4903 for complaints.

### Information Services

At the EUB head offices in Calgary, Information Services processes all purchases of data, documents, and maps. To contact them by telephone, dial (403) 297-8311 and press "2". Walk-in and phone service are available.

### Library and Record Services

The EUB Library, located at the EUB head offices in Calgary, can assist in researching historical or current information that may not be readily available. Walk-in service and telephone service are available. Call (403) 297-8242. ■

## Upcoming Public Hearings

Application No.	Applicant	Hearing Purpose
1403470 1403471 1403473 1403474	Dominion Exploration Canada Ltd.	Application for Well Licences-Pembina Field
Start date: December 12, Lodgepole Multiuse Complex, 4501 - 52 Avenue, Lodgepole		
1413499	International Sovereign Energy Corp.	Application for Compulsory Pooling - Medicine River Field
Start date: December 14, EUB Offices, 640 - 5th Avenue SW, Calgary		
1399611	Direct Energy Regulated Services	Application for Approval of 2005/2006 Default Rate Tariffs and 2005/2006 Regulated Rate Tariffs Process - Negotiated Settlement Process and Further Process (remaining issues)
Start date: December 29		
1392129 1392214 1392133 1392211 1392135 1392210 1392138 1392209 1392145 1392208 1392147 1392207 1392149 1392206 1392156 1392204 1392157 1392195 1392160 1392193 1392167 1392192 1392175 1392190 1392180 1392189 1392183 1392185	Imperial Oil Resources	Applications for 28 well licences and associated pipeline tie-ins - Bantry Field
Start date: January 10, Brooks Heritage Inn and Convention Center, 1303 - 2nd Avenue East, Brooks		
1393397 1412764 1393399 1394246 1393401 1394241 1393404 1393882 1393405 1393442 1393406 1393419 1393407 1393415 1393410 1393414 1393412	EnCana Corporation	Applications for 15 vertical wells, a licence to amend an existing compressor station and 46 pipelines - Wimborne & Twining Fields
Start date: January 11, Torrington Community Center, 202 -2nd Avenue South, Torrington		

## Pending Decisions

Application No.	Applicant	Hearing Purpose
1397909 1407749	Ketch Resources Ltd. (Formerly Bear Creek Energy Ltd.)	Review of Well Licence No. 0313083 UID 00/13-23-046-02 W5M/0 Surface Location LSD 1-27-46-2 W5M - Licence to construct and operate a pipeline and licence to construct and operate a single well gas battery - Pembina Field
1388116	Canadian Natural Resources Limited	Application for a Pipeline Licence - Templeton Field
1396821	Bonterra Energy	Licence to construct and operate a natural gas pipeline - Pembina Field
1400690	ATCO Gas	2005-2007 General Rate Application
1421444	ATCO Gas North	Approval of Sale of the Red Deer Operating Center to 1135968 Alberta Ltd.
1423181	ATCO Electric Ltd.	2006 Interim Tariff Application
1396409	Nova Gas Transmission Ltd.	2005 General Rate Application - Phase II
1399997	ATCO Electric Ltd.	2005-2006 General Tariff Application

This list is subject to change at any time, so please check the complete list of upcoming public hearings on the EUB Web site at <[www.eub.gov.ab.ca/bbs/applications/hearings/hearings.pdf](http://www.eub.gov.ab.ca/bbs/applications/hearings/hearings.pdf)>. If you do not have Internet access, contact EUB Information Services at (403) 297-8190.

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### Tell us how we're doing

Please send your comments and suggestions to <[acrosstheboard@gov.ab.ca](mailto:acrosstheboard@gov.ab.ca)>

### For general inquiries, contact the EUB Customer Contact Centre

Telephone: (403) 297-8311 (press 0)  
E-mail: <[eub.inquiries@gov.ab.ca](mailto:eub.inquiries@gov.ab.ca)>

### For EUB publications or data, contact EUB Information Services

640-5 Avenue SW, Main Floor  
Calgary, Alberta T2P 3G4  
Telephone: (403) 297-8311\* (press 2) Fax: (403) 297-7040  
E-mail: <[eub.info\\_services@eub.gov.ab.ca](mailto:eub.info_services@eub.gov.ab.ca)>  
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### For Alberta Geological Survey (AGS) documents on geological research, contact

Information Sales  
4th Floor, Twin Atria, 4999-98th Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta T6B 2X3  
Telephone: (780) 422-1927\* Fax: (780) 422-1918  
E-mail: <[EUB.AGS-InfoSales@gov.ab.ca](mailto:EUB.AGS-InfoSales@gov.ab.ca)>  
Web: <[www.ags.gov.ab.ca](http://www.ags.gov.ab.ca)>

### Questions, complaints, problems?

**Utilities:** For information or to file a consumer utility complaint, contact us at

EUB Utilities Branch, 10th floor, 10055-106 Street,  
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2Y2  
Fax: (780) 427-6970  
Complaints: (780) 427-4903\*  
E-mail: <[utilities.concerns@eub.gov.ab.ca](mailto:utilities.concerns@eub.gov.ab.ca)>

**Oil and gas:** For information or complaints about new or existing oil and gas developments and facilities, we recommend contacting the operating company first. If the company does not respond appropriately, you may contact the nearest EUB Field Centre.

### EUB Field Centres (24-hour service)

Bonnyville	(780) 826-5352*
Drayton Valley	(780) 542-5182*
Grande Prairie	(780) 538-5138*
Fort McMurray	(780) 743-7214*
Medicine Hat	(403) 527-3385*
Midnapore	(403) 297-8303*
Red Deer	(403) 340-5454*
St. Albert	(780) 460-3800*
Wainwright	(780) 842-7570*

\* To call toll free from anywhere in Alberta, dial 310-0000 and enter the phone number, including area code, or press zero for a RITE operator.

### Across the Board Advisory Committee

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