

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 706

BY REPRESENTATIVE RISER

ENERGY/OIL & GAS WELLS: Provides for the operation of commercial saltwater disposal wells

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 30:4.4, relative to commercial Class II disposal wells; to establish a default
3 maximum authorized surface injection pressure for commercial disposal wells; to
4 create a process for operators to apply for an increased maximum authorized surface
5 injection pressure; to provide a timeline for department approval or denial of
6 applications; to provide definitions; to provide for violations and penalties; and to
7 provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 30:4.4 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 §4.4. Class II disposal wells; maximum authorized surface injection pressure

11 A. The purpose of this Section is to establish the following for commercial
12 Class II disposal wells:

13 (1) A default maximum authorized surface injection pressure.

14 (2) A process for operators to apply to the department for an increased
15 maximum authorized surface injection pressure.

16 (3) A timeline in which the department shall approve or disapprove of
17 applications for an increased maximum authorized surface injection pressure.

18 B. Definitions. The terms in this Subsection shall have the following
19 meaning for the purposes of this Section:

1 (1) "Confining zone" means a geological formation, group of formations, or
2 part of a formation stratigraphically overlying the injection zone that acts as a barrier
3 to fluid movement above an injection zone.

4 (2) "Disposal well" means a commercial Class II injection well that is used
5 to inject into the subsurface exploration and production wastes as defined in LAC
6 43:XIX.501.

7 (3) "Fracture gradient" means the pressure gradient, expressed in pounds per
8 square inch per foot, at which hydraulic fractures initiate in a formation.

9 (4) "Injection interval" or "injection point" means the portion of the injection
10 zone where the perforations of the injection well are located and where injection into
11 the formation occurs, measured from the top-most perforation to the bottom-most
12 perforation.

13 (5) "Injection zone" means a geological formation, group of formations, or
14 part of a formation permitted to receive fluids through a well.

15 (6) "MASIP" means the maximum authorized surface injection pressure.

16 (7) "Verified field data" means data obtained from step-rate tests,
17 instantaneous shut-in pressure (ISIP) measurements, fracture-closure pressure
18 determinations, fall-off analyses, or other tests performed in accordance with
19 American Petroleum Institute Recommended Practice (API RP) 100-1 or its
20 successor.

21 C. Baseline standard. Injection pressure at the wellhead shall not exceed a
22 maximum which shall be calculated so as to assure that the pressure during injection
23 does not initiate new fractures or propagate existing fractures through the confining
24 zone.

25 D. Default MASIP. If no application for an increased MASIP is made
26 pursuant to Subsection E of this Section or if an applicant fails to meet the
27 requirements of Subsection E of this Section, the department may calculate the
28 MASIP at ninety percent of the fracture gradient for the injection interval, using the

1 fracture gradient of the injection interval established in Eaton's fracture gradient
2 chart or with other verified field data.

3 E. Increases to the default MASIP.

4 (1) Any operator either seeking a commercial Class II disposal well permit
5 or with an existing commercial Class II disposal well permit may apply for an
6 increased MASIP by demonstrating the following to the department:

7 (a) Based on verified field data from the subject well or an offset well with
8 similar geology which is anchored to or with a calibrated fracture model or
9 supporting data set, an increased MASIP will not cause fractures to be initiated or
10 propagated through the confining zone. Fractures in or above the injection interval
11 and in the injection zone, as shown by the verified field data and the fracture model
12 or supporting data set, are permitted if the fractures do not extend through the
13 confining zone.

14 (b) A Louisiana-licensed professional engineer or geoscientist has attested
15 in an affidavit as to the validity of the data and model submitted.

16 (c) There is sufficient confining shale or qualifying confining formations
17 between the proposed injection interval and any intervals that are productive of oil
18 or gas within a one mile radius of the disposal well.

19 (d) The casing requirements provided in LAC 43:XIX.415 have been met.

20 (e) There are no artificial penetrations within the area of review or any such
21 penetrations have been properly sealed, completed, or plugged and abandoned.

22 (f) A monitoring well or wells monitor the base of the underground source
23 of drinking water.

24 (g) Historical seismic data for the area of interest does not show increased
25 seismicity or, if it does, the operator has submitted seismic monitoring and response
26 plans approved by the department. The area of interest for this demonstration shall
27 be a five mile radius from the well.

28 (2) If the demonstration submitted for a disposal well meets the requirements
29 of Paragraph (1) of this Subsection, the MASIP for the disposal well may be

1 permitted at up to one half pound per square inch per vertical foot, based on the
2 depth to the top-most perforation, but at a minimum shall be permitted at four-tenths
3 of a pound per square inch per vertical foot, based on the depth to the top-most
4 perforation.

5 (3) The department shall approve an increased MASIP that conforms with
6 Paragraph (2) of this Subsection or a written denial for failure to meet the required
7 demonstration within sixty days of receipt of an application submitted pursuant to
8 this Section.

9 G. Enforcement. Exceeding a permitted MASIP or violating a condition
10 imposed pursuant to this Section shall constitute a violation of this Section subject
11 to penalties provided in R.S. 30:18.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 706 Original

2026 Regular Session

Riser

Abstract: Establishes default maximum allowable surface injection pressure.

Present law authorizes the secretary of the Dept. of Conservation and Energy to regulate Class II injection wells for the disposal of oil and gas exploration and production waste.

Proposed law retains present law.

Proposed law establishes a baseline standard for allowable injection pressure for commercial disposal wells by incorporating present law contained in federal regulations.

Proposed law provides that the default MASIP for commercial disposal may be calculated by the department at 90% of the fracture gradient for the injection interval.

Proposed law creates a process for operators to apply to the department for an increased MASIP by demonstrating the following to the department:

- (1) An increased MASIP will not cause fractures through the confining zone.
- (2) A licensed professional engineer or geoscientist attests to the validity of the first demonstration.
- (3) There are sufficient confining formations between the disposal well and any oil or gas well within one mile.
- (4) Regulatory casing requirements have been met.
- (5) There are no artificial penetrations within the area of review or penetrations have been properly sealed, completed, or plugged and abandoned.
- (6) There are monitoring wells that monitor the underground source of drinking water.
- (7) Historical seismic data for the area of interest does not show increased seismicity or the operator has seismic monitoring and response plans approved by the department.

Proposed law requires that the MASIP for an operator that meets the required demonstrations must be allowed at 0.4 pounds per square inch per vertical foot from the surface to the top-most perforation and may be allowed up to 0.5 pounds per square inch per vertical foot.

Proposed law requires the department to approve or deny an application for an increased MASIP within 60 days of receiving the application.

Proposed law provides that exceeding a permitted MASIP or violating any provisions of proposed law is a violation subject to penalties established in present law.

(Adds R.S. 30:4.4)