

NEWS | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | July 27, 2021

State and local agencies provide McKenzie County oil well fire update

BISMARCK, N.D. – An oil well fire occurred Thursday, July 22, on a well site operated by Petro-Hunt. The fire is located about one-half mile south of Lake Sakakawea near Keene in McKenzie County. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

The operator and responders have contained the fire and any residual product to the well pad location, which continues to burn. “Although road closures are minimal, for the public’s safety, we ask people to find alternative routes and to abstain driving or boating near the fire to avoid interfering with this active response,” cautions McKenzie County Emergency Manager Karolin Jappe.

The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality is informing residents in the surrounding areas to be “air aware” and monitor their local air quality at <https://www.airnow.gov>. The state’s ambient monitoring network is well-positioned to monitor this incident. Any significant emissions that may be associated with this event would be detected through this network.

“Many weather apps specify local Air Quality Index (AQI). Air quality conditions can change hourly and may be impacted by local weather patterns - such as western forest fire smoke - or localized incidents,” said Environmental Scientist Adam Rookey. People sensitive to particle pollution should consider reducing their outdoor exposure during periods of moderate to poor AQI. Always contact your healthcare provider immediately if you are experiencing trouble breathing.

North Dakota Department of Mineral Resources says Petro-Hunt has brought in Wild Well Control, a well control response team, to assist. The priority on location is to continue to control the fire to allow for safe removal of surrounding equipment before shutting in the wells on location.

Responding agencies include McKenzie County Emergency Management, McKenzie County Sherriff Department, McKenzie County Ambulance services, Keene Fire Department, North Dakota Department of Mineral Resources, North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality and North Dakota Forest Service, in addition to Petro-Hunt’s emergency response team and Wild Well Control.

State agencies are notified about hazardous spills and releases through a unified reporting system at <https://spill.nd.gov>. Energy industry producers, transporters and developers, as well as the public, can report hazardous materials spill events through the website or by calling 1-833-99SPILL (1-833-997-7455). In accordance with state and federal law, a spill/release must be reported within 24 hours of the incident to North Dakota agencies responsible for remediating and documenting spills.

For more information contact:

Katie Haarsager
North Dakota Department of Mineral Resources
PHONE: 701-328-8036 | EMAIL: kahaarsager@nd.gov

Karolin Jappe
McKenzie County Emergency Management
PHONE: 701-444-7483 | EMAIL: kjappe@co.mckenzie.nd.us

Adam Rookey
North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality
PHONE: 701-328-5195 | EMAIL: arookey@nd.gov

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