

Introduced by

Energy and Natural Resources Committee

(At the request of the Industrial Commission)

1 A BILL ~~for an Act to amend and reenact subdivision b of subsection 1 of section 38-08-04 of the~~  
2 ~~North Dakota Century Code, relating to the jurisdiction of the industrial commission to regulate~~  
3 ~~the permitting and amalgamation of the underground storage of oil and gas.~~ for an Act to create  
4 and enact section 15-05-09.1 and chapter 38-25 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to  
5 the authority of the board of university and school lands to lease lands under its control for the  
6 underground storage of oil or gas and the jurisdiction of the industrial commission to regulate  
7 the permitting and amalgamation of the underground storage of oil or gas.

8 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

9 ~~**SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Subdivision b of subsection 1 of section 38-08-04 of the North~~  
10 ~~Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:~~

11 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ b. To regulate:~~

12 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (1) The drilling, producing, and plugging of wells, the restoration of drilling and~~  
13 ~~production sites, and all other operations for the production of oil or gas.~~

14 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (2) The shooting and chemical treatment of wells.~~

15 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (3) The spacing of wells.~~

16 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Operations to increase ultimate recovery such as cycling of gas, the~~  
17 ~~maintenance of pressure, and the introduction of gas, water, or other~~  
18 ~~substances into producing formations.~~

19 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (5) Disposal of saltwater and oilfield wastes.~~

20 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (a) The commission shall give all affected counties written notice of~~  
21 ~~hearings in such matters at least fifteen days before the hearing.~~

22 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (b) The commission may consider, in addition to other authority granted~~  
23 ~~under this section, safety of the location and road access to saltwater~~  
24 ~~disposal wells, treating plants, and all associated facilities.~~

- 1 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (6) The underground storage of oil or gas.~~
- 2 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (a) Geologic storage is allowed if permitted by the commission. A permit~~  
3 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ may be transferred if the commission consents.~~
- 4 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (b) Before issuing a permit, the commission shall find:~~
- 5 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ [1] That the storage operator has complied with all requirements set~~  
6 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ by the commission.~~
- 7 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ [2] That the storage facility is suitable and feasible for injection and~~  
8 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ storage.~~
- 9 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ [3] That the storage operator has made a good faith effort to get the~~  
10 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ consent of all persons that own the storage reservoir's pore~~  
11 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ space.~~
- 12 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ [4] That the storage operator has obtained the consent of owners~~  
13 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ and lessees of at least fifty-five percent of the storage reservoir's~~  
14 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ pore space.~~
- 15 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ [5] Whether the storage facility contains commercially valuable~~  
16 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ minerals and, if the facility does, a permit may be issued only if~~  
17 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ the commission is satisfied that the interests of the mineral~~  
18 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ owners and mineral lessees will not be adversely affected or~~  
19 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ have been addressed in an arrangement entered by the mineral~~  
20 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ owners, mineral lessees, and storage operator.~~
- 21 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ [6] That the proposed storage facility will not adversely affect~~  
22 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ surface waters or formations containing freshwater.~~
- 23 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ [7] That the storage facility will not endanger human health or~~  
24 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ unduly endanger the environment.~~
- 25 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ [8] That the storage facility is in the public interest.~~
- 26 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ [9] That the horizontal and vertical boundaries of the storage~~  
27 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ reservoir are defined.~~
- 28 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ [10] That the storage operator will establish monitoring facilities and~~  
29 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ protocols to assess the location and migration of stored~~  
30 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ substances and to ensure compliance with all permit, statutory,~~  
31 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ and administrative requirements.~~

1 ~~[11] That all pore space owners are or will be equitably compensated.~~

2 **SECTION 1.** Section 15-05-09.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted  
3 as follows:

4 **15-05-09.1. Authorization to lease for the underground storage of oil or gas.**

5 The board of university and school lands may lease any lands under the board's control for  
6 the underground storage of oil, natural gas, including hydrogen, and any other liquid  
7 hydrocarbons and may establish any rules and regulations necessary concerning the leasing of  
8 such rights.

9 **SECTION 2.** Chapter 38-25 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as  
10 follows:

11 **38-25-01. Definitions.**

12 As used in this section:

- 13 1. "Commission" mean the industrial commission.
- 14 2. "Gas" includes all natural gas, including hydrogen, and all other fluid hydrocarbons not  
15 defined as oil.
- 16 3. "Geological storage" means the underground storage of oil or gas in a storage  
17 reservoir or salt cavern.
- 18 4. "Oil" includes crude petroleum oil and other hydrocarbons regardless of gravity which  
19 are produced at the wellhead in liquid form and the liquid hydrocarbons known as  
20 distillate or condensate recovered or extracted from gas, other than gas produced in  
21 association with oil and commonly known as casinghead gas.
- 22 5. "Permit" means a permit issued by the commission allowing a person to operate an  
23 underground storage facility.
- 24 6. "Pore space" has the same meaning as in section 47-31-02.
- 25 7. "Reservoir" means a subsurface sedimentary stratum, formation, aquifer, or void,  
26 whether natural or artificially created, including oil and gas reservoirs and saline  
27 formations suitable for or capable of being made suitable for injecting, storing, and  
28 withdrawing oil or gas. The term does not include salt caverns.
- 29 8. "Salt cavern" means a natural occurring cavity contained within a salt formation or a  
30 cavity created in a salt formation by solution mining, suitable for injecting, storing, and  
31 withdrawing oil or gas.

1        9. "Solution mining" means the process of injecting fluid into a well to dissolve rock salt  
2        or other readily soluble rock to create a salt cavern for underground storage of oil or  
3        gas.

4        10. "Storage facility" means the reservoir, salt cavern, underground equipment, and  
5        surface facilities and equipment used or proposed to be used in an underground  
6        storage operation. The term does not include a pipeline used to transport oil or gas to  
7        the storage facility.

8        11. "Storage operator" means a person holding or applying for a permit.

9        **38-25-02. Commission authority.**

10       The commission has authority:

11       1. Over all persons and property necessary to administer and enforce this chapter.

12       2. To regulate activities relating to an underground storage facility, including construction,  
13       solution mining to create salt caverns, operation, and closure.

14       3. To enter an underground storage facility at a reasonable time and manner to inspect  
15       equipment and facilities, to observe, monitor, and investigate operations, and to  
16       inspect records required to be maintained at the facility.

17       4. To require storage operators provide financial assurance, including bonds, to ensure  
18       money is available to fulfill the storage operator's duties.

19       5. To exercise continuing jurisdiction over storage operators and storage facilities,  
20       including the authority to amend or revoke a permit after notice and hearing.

21       6. After notice and hearing, to dissolve or change the boundaries of any commission  
22       established oil or gas field or unit within or near a storage reservoir's or salt cavern's  
23       boundaries.

24       7. After notice and hearing, to adopt reasonable rules and issue reasonable orders to  
25       implement the policies of this chapter.

26       8. After notice and hearing, to grant exceptions to this chapter's requirements and  
27       implementing rules for good cause.

28       **38-25-03. Permit required - Permit transfer.**

29       Geologic storage is allowed if permitted by the commission. A permit may be transferred if  
30       the commission consents.

**38-25-04. Permit hearing - Hearing notice.**

1. The commission shall hold a public hearing before issuing any storage permit.
2. Notice of the hearing must be published for two consecutive weeks in the official newspaper of the county or counties where the storage reservoir or salt cavern is proposed to be located and in any other newspaper the commission requires. Publication deadlines must comply with commission requirements.
3. Notice of hearing must be given to each surface owner of land overlying the storage reservoir or salt cavern and within one-half mile [0.80 kilometer] of the reservoir's or salt cavern's boundaries.
4. If the proposed storage facility contemplates storage of oil or gas in an oil and gas reservoir, notice of the hearing also must be given to each mineral lessee, mineral owner, and pore space owner within the storage reservoir and within one-half mile [0.80 kilometer] of the storage reservoir's boundaries.
5. If the proposed storage facility contemplates storage of oil or gas in a salt cavern, notice of the hearing must be given to each salt mineral lessee, salt mineral owner, and pore space owner within the salt cavern outer boundaries and within one-half mile [0.80 kilometer] of the outer boundaries of the salt cavern, or as otherwise may be required by the commission.
6. If the storage facility contemplates storage of oil or gas in a saline formation or aquifer, notice of hearing must be given to each pore space owner within the storage reservoir and within one-half mile [0.80 kilometer] of the storage reservoir's boundaries.
7. Hearing notices required by this section must comply with the deadlines set by the commission and must contain the information the commission requires.

**38-25-05. Permit requirements - Storage in oil and gas reservoir.**

Before issuing a permit for storage in an oil and gas reservoir, the commission shall find:

1. The storage operator has or will obtain the consent by lease, purchase, or other agreement from all surface owners where surface disturbance activities are necessary and surface facilities will be located.
2. The storage operator has complied with all requirements set by the commission.
3. The storage facility is suitable and feasible for the injection, storage, and withdrawal of oil or gas.

- 1        4. The storage operator has made a good-faith effort to get the consent of all persons
- 2        that own the storage reservoir's pore space.
- 3        5. The storage operator has made a good-faith effort to obtain the consent of all persons
- 4        that own oil and gas minerals and oil and gas leases.
- 5        6. The storage operator has obtained the consent of persons that own at least fifty-five
- 6        percent of the storage reservoir's pore space.
- 7        7. The storage operator has obtained the consent of persons that own at least fifty-five
- 8        percent of the storage reservoir's oil and gas minerals and oil and gas leases.
- 9        8. Whether the storage reservoir contains any commercially valuable oil, gas, or other
- 10       minerals and, if it does, a permit may be issued only if the commission is satisfied the
- 11       interests of the mineral owners or mineral lessees will not be affected adversely or
- 12       have been addressed in an arrangement entered by the mineral owners or mineral
- 13       lessees and the storage operator.
- 14       9. The proposed storage facility will not affect adversely surface waters or formations
- 15       containing fresh water.
- 16       10. The injected oil or gas will not escape from the storage reservoir.
- 17       11. The storage facility will not endanger health or unduly endanger the environment.
- 18       12. The storage facility is in the public interest.
- 19       13. The vertical boundaries of the storage reservoir are defined to include any necessary
- 20       or reasonable buffer zones for the purpose of ensuring the safe operations of the
- 21       storage facility and to protect the storage facility against pollution, invasion, and
- 22       escape or migration of oil or gas therefrom.
- 23       14. The horizontal extent of the injected gas within the storage reservoir, as estimated by
- 24       reasonable means and confirmed through appropriate monitoring methods, are
- 25       defined to include any necessary or reasonable buffer zones for the purpose of
- 26       ensuring the safe operations of the storage facility and to protect the storage facility
- 27       against pollution, invasion, and escape or migration of oil or gas therefrom.
- 28       15. The storage operator will establish monitoring facilities and protocols to assess the
- 29       location and migration of oil and gas, if any, injected for storage and to ensure
- 30       compliance with all permit, statutory, and administrative requirements.
- 31       16. All nonconsenting owners are or will be compensated equitably.

**38-25-06. Permit requirements - Storage in saline reservoir or aquifer.**

Before issuing a permit for storage in a saline reservoir or aquifer, the commission shall find:

1. The storage operator has or will obtain the consent by lease, purchase, or other agreement from all surface owners where surface disturbance activities are necessary and surface facilities will be located.
2. The storage operator has complied with all requirements set by the commission.
3. The storage facility is suitable and feasible for the injection, storage, and withdrawal of oil or gas.
4. The storage operator has made a good-faith effort to obtain the consent of all persons that own the storage reservoir's pore space.
5. The storage operator has obtained the consent of persons that own at least fifty-five percent of the storage reservoir's pore space.
6. The proposed storage facility will not affect adversely surface waters or formations containing fresh water.
7. The injected oil or gas will not escape from the storage reservoir.
8. The storage facility will not endanger health or unduly endanger the environment.
9. The storage facility is in the public interest.
10. The vertical boundaries of the storage reservoir are defined to include any necessary or reasonable buffer zones for the purpose of ensuring the safe operations of the storage facility and to protect the storage facility against pollution, invasion, and escape or migration of oil or gas therefrom.
11. The horizontal extent of the injected gas within the storage reservoir, as estimated by reasonable means and confirmed through appropriate monitoring methods, are defined to include any necessary or reasonable buffer zones for the purpose of ensuring the safe operations of the storage facility and to protect the storage facility against pollution, invasion, and escape or migration of oil or gas therefrom.
12. The storage operator will establish monitoring facilities and protocols to assess the location and migration of oil and gas, if any, injected for storage and to ensure compliance with all permit, statutory, and administrative requirements.
13. All nonconsenting pore space owners are or will be compensated equitably.

**38-25-07. Permit requirements - Storage in salt cavern.**

Before issuing a permit for storage in a salt cavern, the commission shall find:

1. The storage operator has or will obtain the consent by lease, purchase, or other agreement from all surface owners where surface disturbance activities are necessary and surface facilities will be located.
2. The storage operator has complied with all requirements set by the commission, including all necessary permits to conduct solution mining, if applicable.
3. The storage facility is suitable and feasible for the injection, storage, and withdrawal of oil or gas.
4. The storage operator has made a good-faith effort to obtain the consent of all persons that own the salt cavern's pore space.
5. The storage operator has made a good-faith effort to obtain the consent of all persons that own the salt cavern's salt minerals and salt leases.
6. The storage operator has obtained the consent of persons that own at least fifty-five percent of the salt cavern's pore space.
7. The storage operator has obtained the consent of persons that own at least fifty-five percent of the salt cavern's salt minerals and salt leases.
8. The proposed storage facility will not affect adversely surface waters or formations containing fresh water.
9. The injected oil or gas will not escape from the salt cavern.
10. The storage facility will not endanger health or unduly endanger the environment.
11. The storage facility is in the public interest.
12. The horizontal and vertical boundaries of the salt cavern are defined to include a buffer zone from the outer walls of the cavern for the purpose of ensuring the safe operation of the storage facility and to protect the storage facility against pollution, invasion, and escape or migration of gas therefrom.
13. The storage operator will establish monitoring facilities and protocols to assess the location and migration of oil and gas, if any, injected for storage and to ensure compliance with all permit, statutory, and administrative requirements.
14. That all nonconsenting owners are or will be equitably compensated.

1 **38-25-08. Amalgamating property interests.**

2 If a storage operator does not obtain the consent of all persons owning a pore space and of  
3 mineral interest owners when required by this chapter, the commission may require the interest  
4 owned by the nonconsenting owners be included in an approved storage facility and subject to  
5 geologic storage.

6 **38-25-09. Ownership of oil and gas.**

7 All oil or gas previously reduced to possession and subsequently injected into underground  
8 storage facilities must be deemed the property of the storage operator subject to the obligation  
9 to pay royalties as set forth in section 38-25-10.

10 **38-25-10. Injection of produced gas - When royalties owed.**

11 1. Unless otherwise expressly agreed by the storage operator, mineral owners, and lease  
12 owners, royalties on gas produced but not sold and which is injected into a storage  
13 facility instead of flaring or for lack of market, are not due on the produced and stored  
14 gas until gas volumes actually are withdrawn from the storage facility, sold, and  
15 proceeds received from the sale.

16 2. Prior to gas being withdrawn and sold from a storage facility under this section, the  
17 storage operator, after notice and hearing, shall obtain approval from the commission  
18 evidencing a reasonable and equitable method of allocation of the stored gas sale  
19 proceeds to the rightful mineral, royalty, and leasehold owners of the gas injected into  
20 storage. The commission may adopt such rules and orders as necessary to implement  
21 the purposes of this section.

22 **38-25-11. Application.**

23 This chapter does not apply to applications filed with the commission which propose to use  
24 produced gas for an enhanced oil or gas recovery project. Those applications must be  
25 processed under chapter 38-08.