

Carlsbad "South Y" Brine Well Chronology

The site is located between U.S. 285 and U.S. 62-180 in Carlsbad. The well is regulated and permitted through the State of New Mexico, who also collects royalties. The New Mexico Oil Conservation Division has primary regulatory authority over the well due to the EPA's Underground Injection Control program.

August 1978	The initial brine production well (Eugenie #1) goes into service under the operation Permian Brine Sales.
November 1979	The second well (Eugenie #2) goes into service to be used for fresh water injection after hydraulic fracturing.
July 1995	I&W buys property from B&E Inc.
January 2000	Eugenie #2 is plugged after failing its integrity test.
July 18, 2008	Following the collapse of the Jim's water Service brine well near Artesia, OCD reviews the sonar logs and evaluates the brine well system. OCD's initial review indicates the potential for a large roof to the cavern, which could possible present a risk to the public.
July 22, 2008	Acting on the OCD's orders, I&W shuts down Eugenie#1. The well is later plugged, also on the OCD's orders.
March 9, 2009	OCD staff estimate the cavern diameter to be greater than 400 feet. The calculation is based on the amount of brine produced at the facility according to production records.
March 28, 2009	The OCD hosts a Brine Well Work Group to discuss effective tools for evaluating the potential for collapse of closed and operational brine wells.
April 2, 2009	The OCD submits a purchase order to retain RESPEC, Inc. to provide technical advice on the brine well situation. RESPEC submits a preliminary survey and recommendations on an early warning system.
April 27, 2009	OCR orders I&W off of the property. All operations at the site have ceased, and fencing of the property is put in place.
May 2009	Daily progress reports on surveying are submitted to the OCD. RESPEC continues to install tiltmeters to measure movement.
October 2009	OCD calls its third public meeting to discuss data obtained and preliminary interpretations. OCD announces that it does not have the funding to continue monitoring.
November 2009	The City of Carlsbad and Eddy County declare a state of emergency and establish the Brine Well Working Group. RESPEC is now under contract to the City of Carlsbad.
2010	The OCD, at this point, again resumes responsibility for monitoring the well, now using AMEC Environment & Infrastructure, Inc. for monitoring and reporting.
March 9, 2010	Governor Richardson signs House Bill 208, introduced by Rep. John Heaton, conditionally allowing additional severance to flow into OCD's Reclamation Fund. The intent of this bill was funding for remediation of the South Y Brine Well.
September 2014	A feasibility study by state officials and AMEC indicates a high probability of failure within 10 to 25 years.
October 2015	State officials announce that the brine well is closer to collapse than previously announced, due to extreme flooding.
January 2016	New Mexico State Rep. Cathrynn Brown introduces bill asking for funding from the general fund to be set aside to create an authority focused on remediation.
Summary	The brine well has been a State of New Mexico interest and responsibility since its opening in 1978. The state permitted and regulated the brine well. The state benefitted from the brine well's royalties. The state has been the primary responsive party since the issue was raised in 2008. The closure of this brine well is a state issue in every sense of the word.