



Notification of intent to sink boreholes and shafts and the subsequent provision of information

Requirements under the provisions of the Mining Industry Act 1926

The powers vested in the Committee of the Privy Council for Scientific and Industrial Research by the Mining Industry Act 1926 have been transferred to the Natural Environment Research Council by the Science and Technology Act 1965. The relevant section of the Mining Industry Act 1926 is reproduced in the [Appendix](#).

The intention of these sections of the Acts is to ensure that all information obtained from the sinking of boreholes and shafts for minerals including petroleum is made available to the British Geological Survey. This information, together with that obtained from the surveys carried out by the staff of the Geological Survey, comprises a considerable volume of data on the geological structure of this country and the nature and extent of its mineral resources. This data is either published or held available for public inspection, except that information communicated as confidential is not divulged without consent.

1 Operations on which information is required

Any of the following operations carried out for the purpose of searching for or getting any minerals, whether onshore or within UK territorial waters:

- (a) The sinking of a new borehole or shaft from the surface to a depth of more than 100ft (30m);
- (b) The sinking of a new borehole or shaft, commencing from sub-surface workings and intended to reach a depth of more than 100 ft (30 m) below the surface;
- (c) The deepening of an existing borehole or shaft of less than 100ft (30m) so as to reach a depth of more than 100 ft (30 m) from the surface;
- (d) The deepening of an existing borehole or shaft of more than 100 ft (30 m) in depth.

2 Duties of persons sinking boreholes and shafts for minerals

Any person carrying out any of the above operations is required to:

- (a) Give written notification before operations begin of the intention to sink a borehole or shaft. This notification should be sent to:

For England and Wales:

The Records Officer
National Geological Records Centre
British Geological Survey
Keyworth
Nottingham
NG12 5GG

For Scotland:

The Records Officer
National Geological Records Centre
British Geological Survey
Murchison House
West Mains Road
Edinburgh

Standard forms are available from the above addresses.

- (b) Keep a record of the operations with details of the nature and thickness of the strata and the depth at which each bed was found. Standard record sheets are available.
- (c) Retain specimens of the strata either as cores or fragments, for a period of at least six months.

- (d) Allow any properly authorised officer free access to all reasonable times to any such shaft, borehole or core to inspect and take copies of the records, to inspect all cores or fragments obtained, and to take representative specimens of such cores or fragments.
- (e) Allow, in underground workings, to any properly authorised officer, facilities similar to those in (d) above; such officer to have the same rights as to the production and examination of plans and sections as are conferred on Inspectors of Mines.

Authorised officers will carry suitable identification.

Copies of notification and borehole record forms are provided free of charge on request to the above addresses.

3 Procedures to facilitate the work of the British Geological Survey

It is suggested that the following procedures be adopted:

- (a) The purpose of the sinking of a borehole or shaft is stated at the time of notification.
- (b) A full description of the site is provided, with an accurate spatial reference and where appropriate a tracing, preferably from a 1:10 000 Ordnance Survey map; the level of the ground surface referred to Ordnance Datum should also be given.
- (c) Cores and fragments from boreholes and the materials obtained from shaft sinkings are laid out in order with depth marks. Any poor core recovery or loss of core should be indicated.
- (d) Care should be taken that cores and other materials are not disturbed before examination by the Geological Survey.
- (e) Special care should be taken to protect any cores or materials likely to disintegrate if exposed to rain or the action of air.

4 Confidential information

All information concerning the sinking of boreholes and shafts will be treated as confidential by the Geological Survey, if a request to this effect is made in writing to the Records Officer, National Geological Records Centre.

A great deal of information is obtained from boreholes which are not notifiable under the Acts, including those sunk during site investigation. The Geological Survey would be glad to be afforded, in connection with all such boreholes, the facilities detailed above.

The co-operation of all those concerned with the sinking of boreholes and shafts, whether notifiable under the Acts or not, is earnestly sought so that the Geological Survey may continue to provide a comprehensive geological advisory service.

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APPENDIX

Section 23 of the Mining Industry Act 1926, as amended by the Mines and Quarries Act 1954, and the Science and Technology Act 1965, reads as follows:

23 —

- (1) Before any person sinks, for the purpose of searching for or getting any minerals, a shaft or borehole intended to reach a depth of more than 30.480 metres below the surface, he shall give to the Natural Environment Research Council (hereinafter referred to as "the Council") notice in writing of his intention to do so, and any person who for such a purpose sinks any such shaft or borehole shall keep a journal thereof, and shall retain for a period of not less than six months such specimens of the strata passed through as may have been obtained in the course of the sinking thereof, either as cores or fragments, and shall allow the Council, or any officer appointed by them, to have free access at all reasonable times to any such shaft, borehole or core, to inspect and take copies of the journals of such shafts or boreholes, to inspect all specimens so obtained and kept, and to take representative specimens of any such cores.
- (2) If the person sinking any such shaft or borehole as aforesaid gives notice in writing to the Council requiring them to treat as confidential any copies of journals or specimens so taken by the Council or by any officer appointed by them, the Council shall not allow those copies or specimens to be published or shown to any person not being an officer of the Council, except with the consent of the person sinking such shaft or borehole:
- (3) The owner or manager of every mine shall allow the Council or any officer appointed by them to have free access at all reasonable times to all underground workings, and shall supply to the Council or to any such officer as aforesaid such information and such specimens of seams or strata sunk through or opened out at the mine as may be reasonably required by the Council.
- (4) If any person sinking any shaft or borehole, or the owner, or manager of any mine fails to comply with any obligation imposed on him by the foregoing provisions of this section, he shall, in respect of each offence, be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.
- (5) Any officer appointed by the Council shall have the same rights as to the production and inspection of plans, sections and drawings which, by or by virtue of the Mines and Quarries Act 1954, are required to be kept, as are by that Act conferred on inspectors, and that Act shall apply accordingly.
- (6) In subsection (1) above, the expression "minerals" includes petroleum within the meaning of Part I of the Petroleum Act 1998.