WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §22-6-19

§22-6-19. Same -- Continuance during life of well; dry or abandoned wells.

In the event that a well becomes productive of natural gas or petroleum, or is drilled for or converted for the introduction of pressure, whether liquid or gas, or for the introduction of liquid for the purposes provided for in section twenty-five of this article or for the disposal of pollutants or the effluent therefrom, all coal-protecting strings of casing and all water-protecting strings of casing shall remain in place until the well is plugged or abandoned. During the life of the well the annular spaces between the various strings of casing adjacent to workable beds of coal shall be kept open, and the top ends of all such strings shall be provided with casing heads, or such other suitable devices as will permit the free passage of gas and prevent filling of such annular spaces with dirt or debris.

Any well which is completed as a dry hole or which is not in use for a period of twelve consecutive months shall be presumed to have been abandoned and shall promptly be plugged by the operator in accordance with the provisions of this article, unless the operator furnishes satisfactory proof to the director that there is a bona fide future use for such well.

WV Legislature