WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §22C-9-3

§22C-9-3. Application of article; exclusions.

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the provisions of this article shall apply to all lands located in this state, however owned, including any lands owned or administered by any government or any agency or subdivision thereof, over which the state has jurisdiction under its police power. The provisions of this article are in addition to and not in derogation of or substitution for the provisions of §22-6-1 *et seq*. of this code.

(b) This article shall not apply to or affect:

(1) Shallow wells other than shallow horizontal wells and those utilized in secondary recovery programs as set forth in in §22C-9-8 of this code and those provided for in §22C-9-4 of this code;

(2) Any well commenced or completed prior to March 9, 1972, unless the well is, after completion (whether the completion is prior or subsequent to that date):

(A) Deepened or drilled laterally subsequent to that date to a formation at or below the top of the uppermost member of the Onondaga Group;

(B) Involved in secondary recovery operations for oil under an order of the commission entered pursuant to §22C-9-8 of this code; or

(C) Drilled laterally as a horizontal well at any depth;

(3) Gas storage operations or any well employed to inject gas into or withdraw gas from a gas storage reservoir or any well employed for storage observation;

(4) Free gas rights; or

(5) Coalbed methane wells.

(c) The provisions of this article shall not be construed to grant to the commissioner or the commission authority or power to:

(1) Limit production or output, or prorate production of any oil or gas well, except as provided in §22C-9-7(a)(6) of this code; or

(2) Fix prices of oil or gas.

(d) Nothing contained in either this chapter or §22-1-1 *et seq*. of this code may be construed so as to require, prior to commencement of plugging operations, a lessee under a lease covering a well to give or sell the well to any person owning an interest in the well,

WV Legislature

including, but not limited to, a respective lessor, or agent of the lessor, nor shall the lessee be required to grant to a person owning an interest in the well, including, but not limited to, a respective lessor, or agent of a lessor, an opportunity to qualify under §22-6-26 of this code to continue operation of the well.

WV Legislature