

**SAFETY ALERT - #02-1999**  
**FLOWING WELLS TO RIG TANKS & VENTING GAS**  
**TO ATMOSPHERE**  
RELEASE DATE: FEBRUARY 1999



**Description:**

All well operators and/or service companies engaged in the practice of bleeding off pressure or flowing a well directly to a rig or open storage tank are cautioned to assess the risks and hazards associated with this procedure.

On sweet or sour wells, consideration must be given to venting any gas through Alberta Boilers and Safety Association (ABSA) approved pressure vessels or pressurized tanks, with gas flared at a stack.

Section 4.2, Well Testing and Section 4.3, Other Flowbacks of Alberta Recommended Practices (ARP's) Volume 4, Well Testing and Fluid Handling outlines proper procedures for venting or flowing wells to tanks. Recent and past incidents have highlighted the need to strictly follow safety practices during this procedure.

ARP Volume 4 is being updated by the Well Testing Committee of the Petroleum Services Association of Canada (PSAC) under the direction of the Drilling and Completions Committee (DACC). The Committee will review the current practice and provide additional recommendations for industry. The Committee welcomes your input and comments prior to May 1, 1999.

**Note:** that ARP's will be referred to in future, as IRPs (Industry Recommended Practices) to facilitate harmonization throughout the western provinces.

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This material is presented for information purposes only. Managers and Supervisors should evaluate this information to determine if it can be applied to their own situations and practices.