

# Land

## Geophysical Exploration Permit

**What Activities Require This Permit?** Any person(s) conducting geophysical exploration should contact the Department to determine if they need to obtain a permit. All seismic exploration that involves the use of explosives is required to have a permit from the Division of Energy, Mineral, and Land Resources (DEMLR) Oil & Gas Program. No such seismic work will be started without a permit and all such work must be carried out as approved.

**What Is The Purpose of This Permit?** The permit provides a method by which the department knows where exploration work is being conducted; places limits on the maximum size and the required depth of burial of explosives; time of day shooting can occur; requirements for removal of pipe used in geophysical exploration operations; and the minimum distance shot locations can be placed from certain features, vessels and bodies of water. The permit process also allows for the assignment of a seismic agent to monitor all seismic shooting.

**Who Issues This Permit?** DEMLR -- Oil & Gas Program

**How Much Will This Permit Cost?** There is no permit fee or bond required.

**What Are My Payment Options for Permit Application Fees?** Not applicable

**If Paying by Check, Who do I Make the Check Payable to and Where Do I Send the Check?** Not applicable

**Where Can I Get The Application For This Permit?** Contact the DEMLR - Oil & Gas Program at the address below. A permit application form will be under development during calendar year 2020.

**How Long Will It Take To Review My Application?** Application for permits for exploration work must be filed in quadruplicate with the Department at least 10 days before issuance of permits, and must be accompanied by a detailed map showing the exact area in which the geophysical operations are to be conducted, such area to be shown, where possible, by reference to established coast objects or landmarks. Permittees must also obtain appropriate assent from the lessee if and where the area under investigation is leased, with exclusive exploration privilege, to other than the permittee.

**Where Do I Submit My Application?** NCDEQ/DEMLR, Oil & Gas Program, 1612 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1612.

**How Long Is My Permit or License or Certificate Valid?** Permits are limited to a period of six months from date of issue, but may be renewed for no more than two additional 90-day periods at the discretion of the Director. Applications for renewal may be made in the form of a letter. After the expiration of a permit and any renewals thereof, work may continue or be resumed under any new permit issued or application made as provided in Rule .0106 of Subchapter 5C.

**Notes/Comments:** Operators must give one week's notice to the Department prior to beginning work.

**Legal Authority/Statute Reference:**

G.S. 113-378 to 113-415 – "Subchapter V. Oil and Gas Conservation – Article 27"  
15A NCAC 05C – "Subchapter 5C – Geophysical Exploration"

**Link:** <http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/energy-mineral-land-resources/energy-group/oil-gas-program>

**Statewide Contact Information:**

NCDEQ/DEMLR  
Oil & Gas Program  
1612 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1612  
Telephone: (919) 707-9231