

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 56th Legislature (2017)

3 SENATE BILL 731

By: Marlatt

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5
6 AS INTRODUCED

7 An Act relating to oil and gas; amending 52 O.S.
8 2011, Section 570.10, which relates to payment of
9 proceeds from sale of oil and gas production;
10 establishing liability for withholding certain
11 royalty payments; removing annual requirement of
12 compounding certain interest; adding persons who may
13 require holder of certain funds to interplead certain
14 funds into court; removing certain interest sums from
15 being subject to certain court proceedings;
16 instructing operator to deem certain funds abandoned
17 and remit payment pursuant to Unclaimed Property Act;
18 specifying circumstances in which interest shall not
19 apply on certain proceeds; updating statutory
20 language; and providing an effective date.

21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

22 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 52 O.S. 2011, Section 570.10, is
23 amended to read as follows:

24 Section 570.10. A. All proceeds from the sale of production
shall be regarded as separate and distinct from all other funds of
any person receiving or holding the same until such time as such
proceeds are paid to the owners legally entitled thereto. Any
person holding revenue or proceeds from the sale of production shall
hold such revenue or proceeds for the benefit of the owners legally

1 entitled thereto. Nothing in this subsection shall create an
2 express trust.

3 B. Except as otherwise provided in this section:

4 1. Proceeds from the sale of oil or gas production from an oil
5 or gas well shall be paid to persons legally entitled thereto:

6 a. commencing not later than six (6) months after the
7 date of first sale, and

8 b. thereafter not later than the last day of the second
9 succeeding month after the end of the month within
10 which such production is sold.

11 2. Notwithstanding paragraph 1 above, royalty proceeds from the
12 sale of gas production from an oil or gas well remitted to the
13 operator pursuant to subsection B of Section 570.4 of this title
14 shall be paid to persons legally entitled thereto:

15 a. commencing not later than six (6) months after the
16 date of first sale, and

17 b. thereafter not later than the last day of the third
18 succeeding month after the end of the month within
19 which such production is sold; provided, however, when
20 proceeds are received by the operator in its capacity
21 as a producing owner, the operator may pay the royalty
22 share of such proceeds to the royalty interest owners
23 legally entitled thereto at the same time that it pays
24 the royalty proceeds received from other producing

1 owners for the same production month, but not later
2 than the last day of the third succeeding month after
3 the end of the month within which such production was
4 sold.

5 3. a. Proceeds from production may be remitted to the
6 persons entitled to such proceeds annually for the
7 twelve (12) months accumulation of proceeds totaling
8 at least Ten Dollars (\$10.00) but less than One
9 Hundred Dollars (\$100.00). Amounts less than Ten
10 Dollars (\$10.00) may be held but shall be remitted
11 when production ceases or by the payor upon
12 relinquishment of payment responsibility.

13 b. Proceeds totaling less than One Hundred Dollars
14 (\$100.00) but more than Twenty-five Dollars (\$25.00)
15 shall be remitted monthly if requested by the person
16 entitled to the proceeds. Amounts less than Ten
17 Dollars (\$10.00) shall be remitted annually if
18 requested by the person entitled to the proceeds.

19 c. Before proceeds greater than Twenty-five Dollars
20 (\$25.00) may be accumulated, payor shall provide
21 notice to the person owning interest as defined in
22 Section 570.2 of this title, entitled to such proceeds
23 that there is an option to be paid monthly for
24 proceeds greater than Twenty-five Dollars (\$25.00).

1 Such notice to the person shall also provide
2 directions for requesting monthly payment, and
3 constitutes notice to all heirs, successors,
4 representatives, and assigns of the person.

5 4. Any delay in determining the persons legally entitled to
6 proceeds from production caused by unmarketable title shall not
7 affect payments to persons whose title is marketable.

8 C. 1. A first purchaser that pays or causes to be paid
9 proceeds from production to the producing owner of such production
10 or, at the direction of the producing owner, pays or causes to be
11 paid royalty proceeds from production to:

- 12 a. the royalty interest owners legally entitled thereto,
- 13 or
- 14 b. the operator of the well,

15 shall not thereafter be liable for such proceeds so paid and shall
16 have thereby discharged its duty to pay those proceeds on such
17 production.

18 2. A working interest owner that pays or causes to be paid
19 royalty proceeds from production to:

- 20 a. the royalty interest owners legally entitled thereto,
- 21 or
- 22 b. the operator of the well,

1 shall not thereafter be liable for such proceeds so paid and shall
2 have thereby discharged its duty to pay those proceeds on such
3 production.

4 3. An operator that pays or causes to be paid royalty proceeds
5 from production, received by it as operator, to the royalty interest
6 owners legally entitled thereto shall not thereafter be liable for
7 such proceeds so paid and shall have thereby discharged its duty to
8 pay those proceeds on such production.

9 4. Where royalty proceeds are paid or withheld incorrectly as a
10 result of an error or omission, the party whose error or omission
11 caused the incorrect royalty payments shall be liable for the
12 additional royalty proceeds on such production and all resulting
13 costs or damages incurred by the party making or withholding the
14 incorrect payment.

15 D. 1. Except as otherwise provided in paragraph 2 of this
16 subsection, where proceeds from the sale of oil or gas production or
17 some portion of such proceeds are not paid prior to the end of the
18 applicable time periods provided in this section, that portion not
19 timely paid shall earn interest at the rate of twelve percent (12%)
20 per annum ~~to be compounded annually~~, calculated from the end of the
21 month in which such production is sold until the day paid.

22 2. a. Where such proceeds are not paid because the title
23 thereto is not marketable, such proceeds shall earn
24 interest at the rate of six percent (6%) per annum ~~to~~

1 ~~be compounded annually~~, calculated from the end of the
2 month in which such production was sold until such
3 time as the title to such interest becomes marketable.
4 Marketability of title shall be determined in
5 accordance with the then current title examination
6 standards of the Oklahoma Bar Association.

7 b. Where marketability has remained uncured for a period
8 of one hundred twenty (120) days from the date payment
9 is due under this section, the holder of such proceeds
10 may, and any person claiming to own the right to
11 receive proceeds which have not been paid because of
12 unmarketable title may require the holder of such
13 proceeds to interplead the proceeds and all accrued
14 interest into court for a determination of the persons
15 legally entitled thereto. Upon payment into court the
16 holder ~~of such proceeds~~ shall be relieved of any
17 further liability for the proper payment of such
18 proceeds and interest thereon.

19 c. In the event title remains unmarketable for two (2)
20 years after an operator provides written notice of the
21 unmarketable title, the operator may deem all accrued
22 proceeds related to such interest to be abandoned and
23 remit such proceeds as payment pursuant to the
24 Unclaimed Property Act, Section 651 et. seq. of Title

1 60 of the Oklahoma Statutes until such time as title
2 is marketable.

3 d. Interest on proceeds that has not been paid prior to
4 the applicable time periods provided in this section
5 shall not apply in the following circumstances:

6 (1) when mineral owners or their assignees elect to
7 take their proportionate share of production in
8 kind, or

9 (2) when a mineral owner or assignee cannot be
10 located after reasonable inquiry by the operator
11 and the proceeds have been remitted to the state
12 pursuant to the Unclaimed Property Act.

13 E. 1. Except as provided in paragraph 2 of this subsection, a
14 first purchaser or holder of proceeds who fails to remit proceeds
15 from the sale of oil or gas production to owners legally entitled
16 thereto within the time limitations set forth in paragraph 1 of
17 subsection B of this section shall be liable to such owners for
18 interest as provided in subsection D of this section on that portion
19 of the proceeds not timely paid. When two or more persons fail to
20 remit within such time limitations, liability for such interest
21 shall be shared by those persons holding ~~said~~ the proceeds in
22 proportion to the time each person held such proceeds.

23 2. When royalty proceeds on gas production are remitted
24 pursuant to subsection B of Section 570.4 of this title:

- 1 a. A first purchaser that causes such proceeds to be
2 received by the operator or by a producing owner in
3 the well for distribution to the royalty interest
4 owner legally entitled thereto within the first month
5 following the month in which such production was sold
6 shall not be liable for interest on such proceeds.
- 7 b. A producing owner receiving royalty proceeds that
8 causes such proceeds to be received by the royalty
9 interest owner legally entitled thereto or by the
10 operator for distribution to the royalty interest
11 owner legally entitled thereto not later than the end
12 of the first month following the month in which
13 proceeds for such production was received by the
14 producing owner from the purchaser shall not be liable
15 for interest on such proceeds.
- 16 c. An operator receiving royalty proceeds that causes
17 such proceeds to be received by the royalty interest
18 owner legally entitled thereto, not later than the end
19 of the first month following the month in which
20 proceeds for such production was received by the
21 operator from the purchaser or producing owner shall
22 not be liable for interest on such proceeds.
- 23 d. Liability for interest provided in subsection D of
24 this section shall be borne solely by the person, or

1 persons, failing to remit royalty proceeds within the
2 time limitations set forth in subsection B of this
3 section. When two or more persons fail to remit
4 within such time limitations, liability for such
5 interest shall be shared by such persons in proportion
6 to the time each person held such proceeds.

7 F. Nothing in this section shall be construed to impair or
8 amend existing or future contractual rights provided for in gas
9 balancing agreements or other written agreements which expressly
10 provide for the taking, sharing, marketing or balancing of gas or
11 the proceeds therefrom. Any proceeds to be paid pursuant to any
12 such agreement shall not commence to earn interest until the sooner
13 of the time provided in such agreement for the payment of such
14 proceeds or ninety (90) days from the date of the depletion of the
15 well. Nothing herein shall be deemed to alter or limit the payment
16 of royalty proceeds as provided in the Production Revenue Standards
17 Act.

18 G. All payments under the Production Revenue Standards Act to
19 owners or any other person or governmental entity legally entitled
20 to the payment may be made by electronic means including but not
21 limited to electronic funds transfer, Automated Clearing House
22 (ACH), direct deposit, wire transfer, or any other similar form of
23 transfer, upon the mutual written consent of the payor and payee.
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1 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2017.

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