

## A Brief History of Oil and Gas Exploration in British Columbia

The history of oil and gas development in British Columbia extends back nearly 125 years. The following brief timeline shows oil and gas exploration up to 1947. That year, the Leduc oil discovery in Alberta ushered in a western Canadian oil boom and the current oil and gas industry. Between 1890 and 1947 about 60 wells were drilled and recorded in B.C.

<b>1889</b>	A railway company looking for coal drilled a hole at Haney on the Fraser River near Pitt Meadows and reported a violent gas blow at a depth of 60 feet.
<b>1890s</b>	Port Haney No. 1 well was drilled adjacent to the railway well, above, and encounters “marsh gas” at a depth of 193 feet.
<b>1891</b>	The Geological Survey of Canada examines oil seepage in the Sage Creek-Flathead area of southeastern B.C.
<b>1901</b>	The B.C. Mines Department examines oil seepage on the Queen Charlotte Islands.
<b>1906</b>	The first officially recorded well was drilled; the Steveston No. 1, in the Fraser River delta. This was abandoned at a depth of 1,200 feet.
<b>1908</b>	Beaver Valley No. 1, Cariboo area.
<b>1909</b>	Akamina No. 1, Flathead area, southeastern B.C., drilled to a depth of 1,256 feet.
<b>1910</b>	Muir Creek No. 1, Sooke area. The well was abandoned at a depth of 1,560 feet. A second Sooke well was drilled before 1920 on Whiffin Spit, total depth was 2,000 feet.
<b>1913</b>	Tian Bay No. 1, Graham Island, Queen Charlotte Islands. This well was drilled to a depth of 1,606 feet and recorded a five-foot flare during drilling.
<b>1920</b>	Queen Charlotte oil shales (Kunga and Maude formations) were evaluated suggesting a potential yield of 10 to 30 gallons oil per ton of rock.
<b>1920</b>	Kamloops No. 1, with a total depth of 662 feet.
<b>1920s</b>	The British Columbia government drills five or six test holes in the Peace River area, just west of the Townships. These were not intended for completion or production.
<b>1941</b>	The British Columbia government drills a test hole near Pine Pass.
<b>Early 1930s</b>	The B.C. government places all lands in the Peace River area under a drilling reserve.
<b>1936 to '47</b>	Two farm gas wells are used for heating and cooking at Steveston on Lulu Island in the Fraser delta, producing gas from 17 feet.
<b>Christmas eve, 1947</b>	Spudding of the first successful gas well in British Columbia — the Peace River Natural Gas No. 1. This was a Cadotte gas well in 6-30-80-13 W6, and eventually flowed gas at 600 to 1200 mcf/day.

A more detailed description of the history of oil and gas exploration in British Columbia can be found in:

Janicki, E., (2008); Petroleum Exploration History of Northeastern British Columbia; in Geoscience Reports 2008, BC Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, pages 41-57.

### Legislation/Administration:

<b>1924</b>	"An Act Respecting Coal, Petroleum, and Natural-Gas Mines".
<b>1936</b>	"Coal and Petroleum Act".
<b>1944</b>	"An Act Respecting Petroleum and Natural Gas". The FIRST "Petroleum and Natural-gas Act", separate from Coal or Mines. Royal Assent March 15, 1944. Proclaimed into effect June 19, 1944.
<b>April 3, 1947</b>	Royal Assent given to a NEW "Petroleum and Natural Gas Act, 1947". Administered by the Coal, Petroleum and Natural Gas Branch of the Department of Lands and Forests
<b>November 5, 1947</b>	First oil and gas tenure was issued; a Permit granting the right to conduct geological work.
<b>April 1, 1953:</b>	Administration of oil and gas tenure and activities transferred to the Department of Mines.
<b>April 1, 1956:</b>	The Petroleum and Natural Gas Branch was established.
<b>1944, 1947, 1954, 1965 and 1982</b>	Major revisions of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Act were undertaken.
<b>1998</b>	The British Columbia Oil and Gas Commission established. It took over all regulatory aspects of oil and gas activities in British Columbia, including exploration and development.
<b>2010</b>	Oil and Gas Activity Act implemented. This act consolidated and modernized regulations previously found within the Oil and Gas Commission Act, the Pipeline Act together with some aspects of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Act.