

# Users Guide to the Historical Well Records on Microfilm

## Background information about the microfilm.

Prior to 1965, all permitting and completion records that were received by the RRC were imaged onto microfilm. After 1965, completion and permitting records were imaged online, and there is an associated lease number connected to those records. Permitting and completion records after 1965 can be found here:

[Imaged Permit and Completion records after 1965](#)

Even more recent Permit and Completion records submitted electronically to the RRC can be found in these locations:

[Current Completions Query](#)

[Current Permit Query](#)

Before 1965, lease numbers did not yet exist. To organize those records, each operator was assigned a 5-digit number. All records from an operator were filed under this 5-digit number. After this 5-digit number, records were further organized alphabetically by lease name.

Operator

- Lease name



Although this organization is fairly straightforward, it is further complicated due to the fact that not all pre-1965 records were imaged onto film at the same time. Records were filmed in batches; or what we refer to as 'runs'.

The first run filmed the records that the RRC had in its possession dating from around 1919 thru 1951. This first run contains rolls 1 – 550.

The second run, called 'add-ons', consist of records received by the RRC after the original run was filmed *as well as* records that may have been dated between 1919 and 1951 but were not included in the original run. The add-ons contain rolls 551 – 895.

There are many more runs after the original run and add-ons. Each of those runs contain records that were received by the RRC after the most recent run was imaged, as well as records that were eligible for previous runs, but were not included.

After the add-ons, runs were called Run 20 through Run 30. After Run 30, runs were called Run A through Run M

There are in total 2229 rolls of pre 1965 well records on microfilm.

Although the organization of the records is fairly simple (5-digit number alphabetized by lease name). The difficulty arises due to the fact that each run may contain the records you are seeking.

Searching for well records prior to 1965 located on the Well Record microfilm consists of 5 steps.

## Step 1:

There are two way you can locate the operator number:

- a. Use the [County Lease Listings](#) Index to look up the lease name, which will show operators associated with that lease. Note that there is no guarantee that the operators shown will be the correct operator for a particular lease, as there can be multiple lease names in the same county with different operator names
- b. Use the [Alphabetized Operator Index](#) look up the 5-digit number associated with a particular operator. Make note of that 5-digit number.



## Step 2:

Consult the [Well Record Roll Index](#). Each roll of film lists a first 5-digit number found on the roll, and a last 5-digit number found on the roll. Whenever you see a roll of film that may contain the 5-digit number found in Step 1, make a note of that roll number. It is likely that you will find multiple rolls that may contain your 5-digit number.

## Step 3:

With a list of roll numbers in hand, proceed to the [Well Record Profile](#).

## Step 4:

Look at the first image on the roll you have chosen. Near the top of each document on the roll of film, you will find a handwritten 5-digit number. This is the 5-digit number associated with the operator that submitted that document to the RRC. All documents on the roll of film are organized numerically by that 5-digit number, then alphabetically by lease name. First scroll through the images until you arrive at the correct 5-digit number, then scroll through those images alphabetically until you arrive at the correct lease name.

## Step 5:

Be aware that even though your 5-digit number may fall within the 5-digit numbers on a particular roll, there is no guarantee that documents for that operator will be on that roll. You may have to move on to a different run.

Please e-mail [records@rrc.texas.gov](mailto:records@rrc.texas.gov) with any questions.