§ 23-0701. Voluntary integration and unitization in oil and natural gas pools and fields.

1. Voluntary integration and unitization in oil pools or fields and in natural gas pools or fields shall be subject to the provisions of this section. When two or more separately owned tracts are embraced within a spacing unit, or when there are separately owned interests in all or a part of a spacing unit, the interested persons may integrate their tracts or interests for the development and operation of the spacing unit. An agreement for the unit or for the cooperative development and operation of a field, pool, or part thereof, may be submitted to the department for approval as being in the public interest or reasonably necessary to prevent waste. Such approval shall constitute a complete defense to any suit charging violation of any statute of this state relating to trusts and monopolies on account thereof or on account of operations conducted pursuant thereto. Failure to submit such an agreement to the department for approval shall not for that reason imply or constitute evidence that the agreement or operations conducted pursuant thereto are in violation of laws relating to trusts and monopolies.

2. Upon twenty-one days notice to the fee owners of oil and gas interests under lease in a spacing unit, a well operator may record as to each tract for which notice has been given a declaration of voluntary integration. The declaration of voluntary integration shall include the acreage applicable to each tract so integrated and the proportion such acreage bears to the entire spacing unit. The declaration of voluntary integration shall be final and binding upon all persons and their heirs, successors and assigns, and all persons who take title by operation of law.