

Tell Ertl Oil Shale Repository Project, 2006

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The Tell Ertl Oil Shale Repository at the Arthur Lakes Library, Colorado School of Mines, houses documents that outline the development of the oil shale industry throughout the world, with emphasis on Colorado and the western United States. Founded in 1989 with a grant from the Tell Ertl Family Trust, it may be the largest single oil shale collection available to the public anywhere in the world. Items of interest to technical and historical researchers include original research reports, personal papers of key oil shale developers, and essential series such as Synthetic Fuels Quarterly Report.

Renewed interest in oil shale has revived interest in the Repository. Although the collection is searchable in the Tell Ertl Database, the records are inadequate by present-day standards, and documents are not online in full text. Materials must be used in the Library, which hinders access by offsite researchers. To improve access to information in the collection, librarians at the Arthur Lakes Library are evaluating the following changes to the Repository:

- Separating technical information (e.g., technical reports) from historical information (e.g., newspaper clippings), to help users more easily find what they need
- Digitizing key items, when possible, to improve access for all users
- Enhancing computer database records, to improve search results

This project will increase the visibility and usability of the Repository for both local and remote users. Digitization of select, significant items will ensure continued access for both present and future generations of oil shale researchers.