

# Shell files new plan to drill in Arctic

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This undated handout photo courtesy of NASA shows a sunset over the Arctic

Royal Dutch Shell has submitted a new plan for drilling in the Arctic offshore Alaska, more than one year after halting its program following several embarrassing mishaps.

The plan to drill two new wells in the potentially oil-rich but environmentally sensitive region in the summer of 2015 is not a final decision, the company stressed.

"If we drill in 2015, the program will consist of two drilling rigs working simultaneously at Shell's Burger prospect in the Chukchi Sea,"

spokesman Curtis Smith told AFP.

The filing, made to preserve the oil giant's options on its leased prospects off the northern coast of Alaska, was submitted Thursday to the Interior Department's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.

Shell completed top-hole drilling for two wells in the Arctic in 2012, the first drilling in the region in more than a decade

But it halted the exploration program in early 2013 following multiple embarrassing problems with its two drilling rigs, which fuelled objections from environmentalists worried over the impact of possible oil spills in the frigid Chukchi Sea.

One rig washed ashore after breaking loose from towing vessels, and another was cited by the US Coast Guard for numerous safety and operational deficiencies.

Shell's plans to resume exploration [drilling](#) include using one of those rigs, the Noble Discoverer, and another not used in the 2012 operations, the Polar Pioneer.



The Shell logo is seen on a flag outside a Shell petrol station in Fleet, Hampshire in southern England on July 29, 2010

"In addition to a new rig, we have fortified our fleet with more anchor handlers, new tugs and additional offshore supply vessels," said Smith.

Greenpeace USA, one of the groups that have fought against [oil drilling](#) in the Arctic, raised its objections to the new proposal.

"Shell is not Arctic-ready, but more important the Arctic will never be Shell-ready," Greenpeace said in a tweet.

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