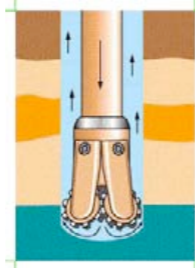


Uses of Clay - Drilling Mud



Cooling and cleaning the drill



Drilling mud slurry



"Gushers" used to be common until the use of drilling mud was implemented

Bentonite and other clays are used in the drilling of oil and water wells. The clays are turned into mud, which seals the walls of the boreholes, lubricates the drill head and removes drill cuttings.

Drilling Fluid: Lifeblood of the Well

In 1900, while drilling an oil well in Spindletop, Texas, workers ran a herd of cattle through a pit filled with water. The mud that resulted, a viscous, muddy slurry of water and clay, was pumped into the borehole. Drilling fluids are still called mud, but engineers no longer rely only on water and clay. Instead, they carefully design compounds and mixtures to meet specific needs under various drilling conditions. Modern drilling fluids are truly the lifeblood of the well. Today's deep wells could not exist without them.

