

# BLACK GOLD™

*Sabotage, Speculation and Strategy in the Oil Industry*



## Player's Manual

# Black Gold Credits

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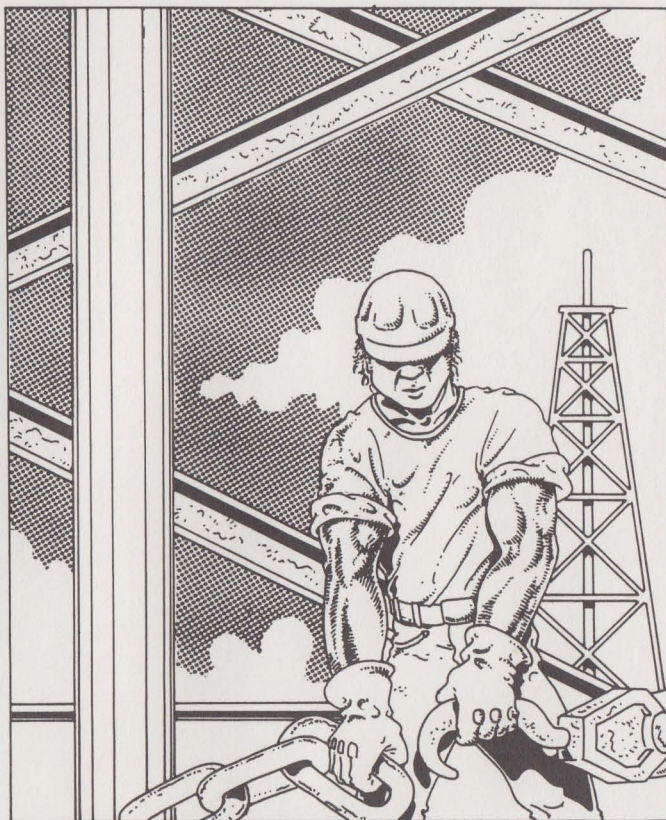
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# BLACK GOLD



*Sabotage, Speculation and Strategy in the Oil Industry*





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## Designer's Introduction

The design concept that led to the development of **Black Gold** was to create a game of commerce based on the international oil industry. Our goal was to produce a program that entertained while recreating the intensity and excitement that's experienced daily in the Chief Executive Officer's office of a major oil company. We were determined that the game would duplicate many of the scenarios faced by industry leaders and make the players reach business decisions based on information they have collected and analyzed. In addition, we strived to develop an outstanding graphic display and include some variety with fast-paced arcade sequences. The program however, emphasizes the decision-making process.

A prerequisite in the game design concerned the multi-player mode where you compete with up to three of your friends. We worked diligently to ensure that the winners of the games must be faster, cleverer and more ruthless than their rivals. Success is a direct result of developing your game skills, reaching accurate conclusions and implementing the proper actions to attain your goal.

While we have tried to be realistic, some concessions had to be made in the interest of game play. Sabotage might not be as prevalent in the real world, but it adds a thrilling element that affects the decisions you make in the game. After all, is it more exciting to sell equipment to a rival company or try to blow up one of its pipelines? The sums for oil prices, production quotas, storage tank capacities and service fees might not reflect today's market, but they are accurate in the way they determine your company's success.

As you begin your first game of **Black Gold**, selecting a company logo and office that reflect your own view of a corporate image, keep in mind that growth can be a slow process and that patience can be a virtue. Pay careful attention to your cash resources and think ahead before making any major decisions. If you have even half the fun playing the game that we had in making it, we'll be satisfied and so will you.



## Quickstart

It isn't necessary to read the entire manual in detail before playing the first game, but you'll find it helpful to skim each section for an overview of the game options before starting.

1. Once the title screen is displayed, press the mouse button or the select key (see reference card for the correct key for your computer) to continue.
2. Now look at the code chart on Page 20. The X coordinates are displayed along the top row and the Y coordinates down the left side. Find the box that corresponds to the X and Y position displayed on screen. The top letter in the corresponding box is the first letter and the bottom letter is the second letter. Enter the top letter first and press Enter. Then enter the second letter and press enter. When "Code correct" is displayed, press the space bar or mouse button to continue. **NOTE: Codes are located on page 20 of this manual.**
3. Now use the up and down arrow keys until the correct number of players is displayed. Note: This value does not include computer players. Then select OK from the on-screen display.
4. Enter the name for each player and select OK.
5. Use the arrow keys until the desired company name and logo is displayed for the indicated player. Select OK. Repeat for each player.
6. Use the arrow keys to scroll through the available office layouts. When the desired office is displayed for a player, select OK. Repeat for each player.
7. Select mission #1, "Best after three years," for your first game. This is the shortest game and provides an ideal introduction to the game.
8. The next screen shows the company logo for each player (including computer players). Select OK if you are satisfied with these selections or Reenter if you want to change them.
9. Before starting the actual game, read the "Hints & Tips for Your First Game" section on the following page.



## Hints & Tips for Your First Game

Before you begin playing your first game, you must understand the following game parameters.

- Time is an important element of the game. Every action requires a specific amount of time to complete. For example, it might take one day to buy an oil storage tank and a day to purchase an expert survey. Keep track of how long each action takes by accessing your office and looking at the calendar on your desk. The amount of time needed to drill a well varies according to the speed you have selected for boring and the firmness of the area you are drilling in.
- You can only sell oil from an individual region once each month. It's a good idea to drill your well at the beginning of the month and sell the oil at the end of the month. In this way, you maximize the yield of your oil well. In some cases, when oil prices are low, you might want to wait an extra month or two before selling your oil. Keep an eye on your cash resources to help you reach a decision on whether to sell or not.
- The order of play dictates that players sequentially complete an entire month's play. For example, player 1 finishes the month before player 2 begins play.
- If you have completed all of the moves you want to make before the calendar shows the last day of the month, click on the desk calendar to advance time to the end of the month.

While experimentation is an excellent way to learn the intricacies of the game, the following hints give you an advantage on your first mission.

- 1. Buy expert surveys.** Before you can start making any money, you need information. Expert surveys help you make a decision about where to drill your first well. Select the computer icon on the right side of the office display. Then select "Expert Survey" to display the map of the world.

Select the box that represents the northern section of the continent of South America. Since cash reserves are

limited at the beginning of the game, this region allows you to purchase less expensive concessions than those found in many other sections of the world.

Select any one of the boxes, and select "Yes" when asked whether you need expertise. **Important:** Next, write down the displayed information in the corresponding location on the enclosed map. You will need this information to reach accurate conclusions about the profitability of each drilling site.

Repeat the steps until you have purchased three expert surveys in South America. Then compare the information to determine which is the most profitable location. This is where you will try to drill your first well. Select "End" to return to the computer menu.

- 2. Buy a storage tank.** You've already determined the location for your first well, but a gushing well is not worth anything unless you have a place to store the oil. Select the "Buy" icon from the computer menu. Then select "Tanks."

Once again, a map of the world is displayed. You must buy a tank in the same region of the world as your oil concessions. Select the northern section of the continent of South America, and then select "Buy Tanks."

Select the up "number arrow" — #1 is displayed next to the price of the tank. You won't need much storage capacity at first, so select a recycled tank. Return to the computer icon menu.

- 3. Buy an Oilfield.** Select Oilfield from the "Buy" menu. Next, select South America where you purchased your expert surveys, and then select the area that corresponds to the most profitable survey you purchased.

- 4. Drill a Well.** Answer yes when asked whether you want to drill a well. Next, select "Own" to indicate that you will drill yourself. You don't have enough money to employ a specialist. (See Drilling a Well for details).



## **Game/Mission Options**

The mission you choose affects the goal of the game and the duration of play. You can select one of the following four missions:

### **Best After Three Years**

1

The winner of this game has accumulated the most liquid and fixed assets at the end of a three year period. Since this is the shortest mission you can select — a few hours is all it takes — it's the best selection for your first mission and a great way to learn the intricacies of the game.

### **More Than \$60 Million Capital**

2

The winner of this game is the first to accumulate \$60 million in liquid assets. This mission takes quite a while to complete, based on your speed and skill as a player.

### **Ruin All Other Players**

3

You win this game when all of your competitors are bankrupted and unable to meet their monthly payments. The duration of this game is largely dependent upon the skill of your competition. Against other skilled players or the computer, the game takes many hours to complete, but matching wits with beginners often results in a quick game.

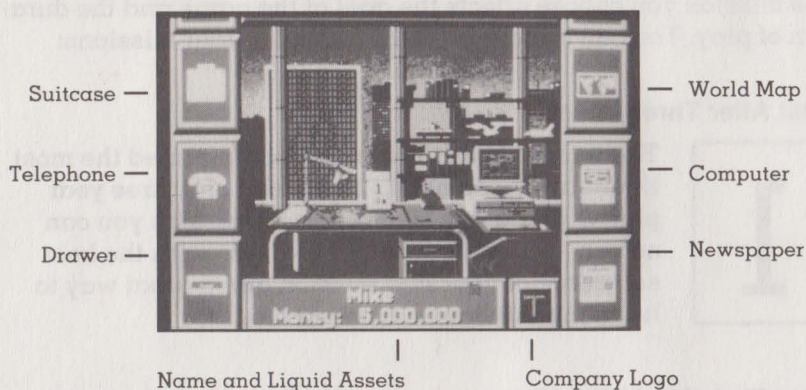
### **80% of Market Share**

4

This game won't end until one player has achieved 80% of the market share. Typically, this game takes longer than any of the others, although it is partly dependent upon the skill of your competition.



## The CEO's Office



Your office is the nerve center of your company. From this location, you can access all of the information and actions that dictate the success of your company in the fast-paced world of the oil industry.

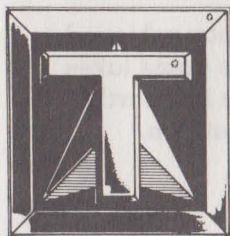
## The Calendar



Showing the day and month, the calendar is an important tool for developing a short- or long-term strategy for your company. Keep your eye on this tool to learn how long it takes to complete specific actions. Click on the calendar if you want to end your turn early and move time forward to the end of the month. Keep in mind that you can only sell oil from a specific region once per month. Once a

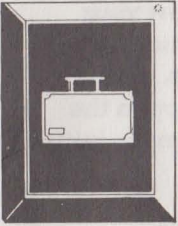
month is completed, other players take their turns and a ticker-tape at the bottom of the screen reviews each players actions and financial status.

## Company Name, Logo and Liquid Assets



At the bottom, middle of the screen, the current player's company logo, name and liquid assets are displayed.

## The Suitcase



Select the suitcase when a telephone or telex message informs you of a fire in one of your oilfields. The suitcase provides access to two different options which will help you avoid further damage to your oilfields and assets.

- Select "Contract" from the suitcase if you want to hire Ted Redhair, the world's leading expert in extinguishing oilfield fires, to help your company.

Of course, he charges for his services and you must determine whether you can afford his expertise.

- Select "Air Ticket" to fly to the site of the fire in your private jet and manage the fire-fighting operations yourself. This is a much cheaper option than hiring an expert, but requires that you complete an action sequence (See Extinguishing an Oilfield Fire for additional details) to save your oilfield.

**Important:** You cannot extinguish fires on offshore sites yourself. Only Ted Redhair has the experience necessary to save these fields.

## The Telephone



You'll hear the telephone ring whenever something extraordinary happens, and it's often bad news.

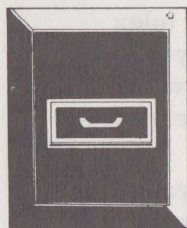
You might be informed of an oilfield fire, an offer of a delivery contract, legal proceedings or messages from detectives and saboteurs. If you don't answer the phone after the first few rings, messages are stored in alphabetical order and can be accessed later by selecting the phone icon. If you fail to

answer the phone, the information will be relayed by telex at the end of the month.

**Important:** Unless you are involved in a critical maneuver when the phone rings, it's a good idea to answer the phone immediately. You wouldn't want to miss a message that one of your oilfields is on fire and lose the opportunity to put out the fire.



## The Drawer



Open your drawer when you want to view your balance sheets and other financial information, employ an agency to protect your assets, or hire someone to sabotage a rival. Once you open the drawer, you can select the following icons to initiate the above options.

**1. Top Secret Investigations.** The competition is ruthless in the oil industry, but you can help protect your company's assets by hiring an agency to keep track of the competition's attempts at sabotage. You can employ agencies for a duration of one to four months, with costs rising as you increase the time factor. At the beginning of the game, investigations are not cost effective and should be avoided.

After selecting the "Investigation" icon, use the arrow keys to scroll through your options. Select "OK" to initiate an action or click outside the Drawer Window to cancel.

If your agency uncovers a rival company's sabotage attempt and subdues the perpetrators, the courts might award you one of the competitor's oilfields as damages.

**2. Top Secret Actions.** Sabotage is an accepted business practice in **Black Gold**, and it's almost a necessity in the longer games to gain a step on your competition. Four different sabotage options are available. You can set fire to a competitor's oilfields, rob the competitor's bank, blackmail a rival's sales representatives or blow up their oil storage tanks.

After selecting the "Action" icon, use the arrow keys to scroll through your options for cost and duration of the attempt. Once the correct attempt is displayed, select "OK" to initiate an action or click outside the Drawer Window to cancel. **Important: Once you have selected "OK" from the options screen, you cannot cancel your attempt.**

From the "Sabotage Window" select the company you wish to destroy, and the action you want to initiate. Select "Do It!" to continue. Remember, if your saboteurs are discovered, the courts might require that you give up oilfields or wells as damages.



## **The Drawer** (continued)

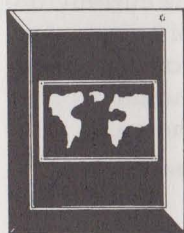
### **3. The Balance Sheet**

Select the balance sheet to view detailed information on your oilfields, storage tanks and contracts. After you select this icon from the drawer, select the specific account that you want to view from the top icons labelled: Oilfields, Storage Tanks and Contracts.

You can then view information on a specific region by using the arrow keys to scroll through the different options. The information displayed for each category is:

- **Oilfields** - The number of oilfields in the selected region, the output in barrels/month, oil capacity, running costs and current market value are displayed. Active and inactive oilfields are separated in the display.
- **Storage Tanks** - The quantity, capacity, current volume and running costs are displayed for the selected region.
- **Contracts** - The duration of contracts with both detective agencies (investigations) and saboteurs (actions) is displayed.

## **TheWorld Map**



When you need an overview of individual ownership of oilfields and the condition of those holdings select the "World Map" icon from the right side of the desk. You can then select any of the eight major sections of the map to access vital information.

Each of the sectional maps is divided into 24 zones. The color and background of the company logo in those boxes provides additional information. If the

box is empty, no company has purchased an oilfield in that zone. The color of a logo indicates the following information:

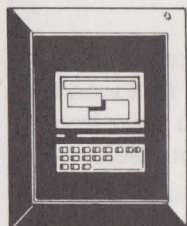
Red Backgroud - Oilfield is burning.

Green Logo - Production has halted, further drilling needed.

White Logo - The oilfield is up for sale.

Black Logo - Oilfield is in production; drilling was successful.

## The Computer Terminal



The computer is the most valuable tool for oil industry executives, and all commercial activity is controlled from your own terminal. When you click on this icon, a new icon menu is displayed which allows you to buy and sell oilfields, tanks and surveys, drill for oil, or view statistical information and graphs on the progress of the game.

### 1. Buy

Select this option if you want to purchase an oilfield or buy storage tanks in a region. Remember, you must own an oilfield before you can drill a well in that location, and you must provide storage facilities in a specific region before drilling in that area of the world.

### 2. Sell

Select this option if you want to sell one of your oilfields or the oil that's collected in your storage tanks.

When selling oil, use the arrow keys to indicate the amount of your oil stocks you wish to sell. At the top of the display is the current rate for a barrel of oil and the current demand in numbers of barrels. As you click on the arrow keys, the computer displays the amount of oil you are offering for sale, the total sale price and the amount of profit you will make from the sale. Press OK to sell amount shown.

**Important: You can only sell the oil from a specific region one time in each month.**

When selling oilfields, choose the region of the world the oilfield is in, then click on the specific oilfield you want to sell. The suggested selling price for that well is displayed. You can change your selling price by clicking on the up and down arrows. If you want to put the oilfield up for sale, select "OK." You will be notified when your well is sold. To cancel, click outside the active window.

### 3. Drill

Select this option if you wish to drill a well in a field you own. At the map, select the region, and the zone that identifies one of your wells. Then choose between drilling on your own or paying someone else for their expertise. (See Drilling for Oil for additional details).



#### **4. Statistics**

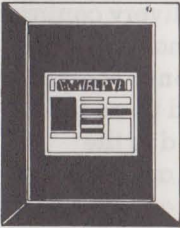
The statistics display provides detailed information about your own company, and allows you to access charts and graphs which analyze the current game situation. You can view graphs that compare your ready capital or invested capital with that of the competition. For your own company, you can view the total dollars available as ready capital, the total amount of invested capital, the number of oil fields you own, the total of your tank storage, the amount of oil per month from all your wells and the total cost per month to run your wells.

Select "END" to exit this display and return to the computer menu.

#### **5. Expert Surveys**

You can purchase expert surveys of any unowned "zone" in the eight different sections of the world. These expert surveys provide the vital information you need to make intelligent decisions to purchase oil concessions and drill wells. With each survey, you learn the price of the oilfield, the running costs, and the expected yield for that zone.

#### **The Newspaper**



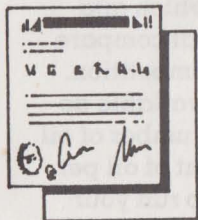
The newspaper only shows a headline, but it's always the main news of the day and has a dramatic impact on your decision-making. The news appears daily, and usually displays information on oil prices (averaged over all regions), the results of court cases, and the natural and man-made disasters which plague the industry.

Normally, you can keep up with the important news by looking in the paper a few times per month. To read the paper, select the Newspaper icon.



## Other Options

### Delivery Contracts



Oil delivery contracts are offered to your company by telephone. These contracts allow you to sell a fixed amount of oil at a fixed price and are unaffected by the current oil rates or demand.

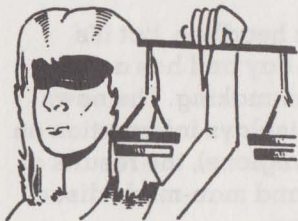
Contracts always relate to a specific world region. A contract obligates you to provide the agreed amount of oil every month in the specified region.

In return, your company receives a set amount of money each month. Contractual agreements define a specific time period in which you must provide oil. For example, you might sign a three, four or five month contract.

Pay careful attention before signing delivery contracts. If your company is unable to deliver the agreed upon amount of oil, a fine is levied against your company by the court system.

Current contracts can be viewed by selecting "Balance Sheet" from your Drawer Menu of icons. Select "Contract" to view.

### The Court System

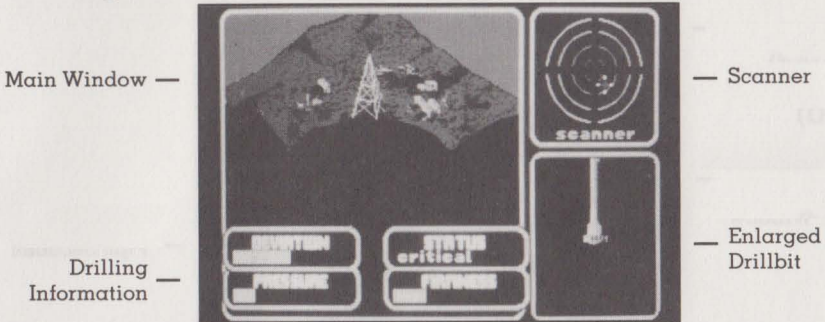


When an act of sabotage is discovered or a company defaults on a delivery contract, court proceedings are automatically initiated. In sabotage incidents, the guilty party loses between one and three oil-field. One oilfield is awarded to the company that won the court action, and the others are awarded to the state and

are once again for sale. In delivery contract defaults, the guilty party is usually fined a specific amount of money. Fines and other awards are announced by telephone and reported in the newspaper.

## Action Sequences

### Drilling for Oil



You can drill for oil in any zone where you have purchased a concession. If you have ample cash resources, you can hire a drilling company to do the work. These specialized companies always succeed and complete the task very quickly. When money is tight however, you must drill for the oil yourself. Whenever you purchase a concession or select "Drill" from the Computer Menu, you have the choice of hiring an expert or drilling on your own.

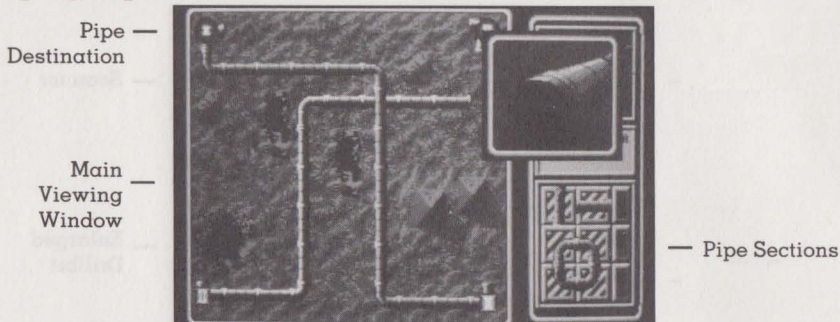
Drilling is controlled by the joystick on Amiga, Atari ST and C64/128 computers, and with the keyboard or joystick on IBM/compatibles. With the joystick, move the handle to keep the drillbit centered on the scanner and the fire button to control your pressure. From the keyboard, the arrow keys control the centering of the drillbit, the Spacebar increases pressure and any other key reduces pressure.

- **Main Viewing Window** - This provides an overview of your progress through the various geologic strata.
- **Drilling Information** - Displays the deviation of your drillbit, the pressure exerted, the firmness of the strata and the status of your drilling. If status remains critical for an extended period, drilling fails.
- **Scanner** - This schematic top view of the bore sight is what you watch to keep your drillbit straight and reach the oil. Using the joystick or arrow keys, keep the crosshair centered in the concentric circles. If you stray too far for an extended time, your drilling fails.
- **Enlarged Drillbit** - Shows an enlarged view of your drillbit and the varied strata the bit passes through.



## Action Sequences (Continued)

### Laying Pipelines



After successfully drilling a well, you might be informed of problems with the workers that require your assistance. In these instances, you must build a pipeline in order to sell your oil.

The resulting action sequence pits you in a race against the computer to lay pipe from one point to another. The winner of the race successfully sells the oil, while the loser must wait another month before trying to sell the accumulated oil from that region.

You must lay a pipeline from the lower right side of the screen to the upper left side of the screen. Flashing markers indicate these positions when this screen is first displayed. The computer attempts to lay a pipeline from the lower left side of the screen to the upper right.

You lay pipe by selecting pipe sections from the "Pipe Sections" area on the lower right. The sections are automatically connected as you select them. You must avoid the obstacles on the screen — mountains, lakes and trees — as you lay the pipe. You cannot cross an obstacle with your pipeline.

As soon as the screen is displayed, take some time to plan the sections you will need to traverse the terrain and connect the two points on the screen. The computer begins laying pipe as soon as you select your first pipe section.

When you beat the computer, a sale is made and the previously estimated profits are automatically transferred to your bank account.

See the enclosed reference card for the specific controls for your computer.



## **Action Sequences (Continued)**

### **Fighting Oilfield Fires**

When you are informed of a fire in one of your oilfields, immediate action is required to prevent a loss of production or the complete destruction of your assets. Select the "Suitcase" icon on the right side of the office display to access your firefighting options.

When you have enough money, you can hire Ted Redhair, the world's leading expert on fighting oilfield fires, to complete this task. He is always successful. Select "Contract" to employ Ted.

If funds are tight, select the "Airline Ticket" to fly to the site in your private plane and supervise the firefighting operations. Once you've parachuted to the site, the only way to stop a fire is by using explosives to blow out the fires.

To blow out a fire, you must move your technician directly in front of a burning well and plant the correct amount of explosives. The higher the flames, the more explosives are needed. Movement is accomplished using either the joystick (C64/Amiga/Atari ST) or the keyboard arrow keys (IBM/C64). Once you're positioned directly in front of a burning well, press the fire button or spacebar to set a stick of dynamite. The stick of dynamite is shown at the top left side of the screen. Repeat to set additional sticks.

Once you've set the dynamite, move away quickly or the subsequent explosion can injure your technician. The physical condition of the technician is shown at the upper right side of the screen (three hearts). If the technician is injured three times, he is taken to the hospital and remaining fires burn out of control.

The condition of the oilfield is displayed next to the technician's heart on the upper right side of the screen. If the indicator moves into the red area, the field is in critical condition. The farther the indicator has moved into the red area when you extinguish the fires, the longer oil production is interrupted.

General Hints

- Make a photocopy of the enclosed regional maps and keep track of all expert surveys. This information is invaluable in determining the quality of the different zones and reaching decisions about where to drill your oil wells.
- When you purchase three concessions in one region that are situated adjacent to one another (vertically or horizontally), the zones will flash upon purchase, you can gain an advantage. The running monthly operating costs are reduced when you drill wells in the three adjacent locations.
- Employ an agency to protect your assets as soon as you can afford it. This protects your company from saboteurs employed by your competitors.
- Check the telephone before ending your turn to make sure you receive important messages with enough time to act on them.

BLACK GOLD CODES

x

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
0	r	e	L	l	N	E	r	e	L	l	N	E	r	e	L	l	N	E	r	e
1	L	l	N	E	r	e	L	l	N	E	r	e	L	l	N	E	r	e	r	e
2	N	e	r	e	L	l	N	E	r	e	L	l	N	E	r	e	L	l	N	E
3	r	e	L	l	N	E	r	e	L	l	N	E	r	e	L	l	N	E	r	e
4	L	l	N	E	r	e	L	l	N	E	r	e	L	l	N	E	r	e	L	l

x

## ***Electronic Zoo Searching for Escaped Entertainment!***

*The Electronic Zoo has started a global search for the quality programs that have managed to escape the entertainment industry. The head zoo keeper said the company is looking for finished software, partially completed titles or novel ideas that stand up and demand attention. If you have a program that combines breakthrough graphics and stand-out sound with a fresh approach to entertainment, contact the zoo keeper at the address below.*

## **Programmers, Game Designers and Computer Artists Welcome in Electronic Zoo!**

*The Electronic Zoo is looking for experienced entertainment software professionals to join their development team. If you have a background in programming, computer graphics or game design, we may have a project for you. Send your resume to:*

**THE ELECTRONIC ZOO**

**3431-A Benson Avenue**

**Baltimore, MD 21227**





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