

Subchapter A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 77.1. Definitions.

The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

Insignificant boundary correction—A small or inconsequential change to the permit boundary to correct an error in mapping, surveying, or other minor adjustment that results in no significant difference in environmental impact.

Related party—A partner, associate, officer, **member, manager,** parent corporation, subsidiary corporation, affiliate or person by or under common control with the applicant, contractor or subcontractor.

Sedimentation pond— A primary sediment control structure, including, but not limited to, a barrier, dam or excavated depression which [**details**] **detains** water runoff to allow sediment to settle out. The term does not include secondary sedimentation control structures, such as straw dikes, riprap check dams, mulches, dugouts and other measures that reduce overland flow velocity, reduce runoff volume or trap sediment, to the extent that secondary sedimentation structures drain to a sedimentation pond.

§ 77.51. License requirement.

(c) *Identification of ownership.* The application shall indicate whether the applicant is a corporation, partnership, single proprietorship, association or other business entity. For business entities other than single proprietorships, the application shall contain the following information if applicable:

(1) The name and address of the applicant, including partners, associates, officers, **members, managers,** parent or subsidiary corporations.

(e) *Refusal to issue or renew license.* The Department will not issue a noncoal surface mining operator's license or renew or amend a license if it finds, after investigation and an opportunity for informal hearing, that a person, partner, associate, officer, **member, manager**, parent corporation or subsidiary corporation has been subject to a bond forfeiture under the act and environmental acts or has failed to comply with an adjudicated proceeding, cessation order, consent order and agreement or decree under the act and environmental acts. The Department will not renew a license for an operator who uses the provisions for payment in lieu of bond unless the operator submits his annual payment with the license renewal application. A person who opposes the Department's decision on issuance or renewal of a license has the burden of proof.

(f) *License renewal requirements.*

(1) A person licensed as a noncoal surface mining operator shall renew the license annually according to the schedule established by the Department.

(2) Notice of license renewal and filing of an application for license renewal shall conform to the following:

(i) ~~[The Department will notify the licensee in writing at least 60 days prior to the expiration of the current license to renew the license. The applicant shall be responsible for filing a license renewal application prior to the expiration of the current license.]~~ The application for renewal shall be made at least 30 days before the current license expires.

§ 77.107. Verification of application.

Applications for permits shall be verified by a responsible official of the applicant with a statement that the information contained in the application is true to the best of the official's information and belief~~[, and attested by a notary public or district justice]~~.

§ 77.108. Permit for small noncoal operations.

(f) The Department will publish its decision on a small noncoal permit application and a final bond release in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*. Permit applications, **transfers**, and bond releases under this section are exempt from the newspaper public notice requirements of section 10(a) of the act (52 P. S. § 3310(a)).

(m) An application for a small noncoal permit shall be reviewed, approved or denied in accordance with § 77.126(a)(1)-(8)[, ~~and~~] (10) and (11) (relating to criteria for permit approval or denial).

§ 77.109. Noncoal exploration activities.

(a) A person who intends to conduct noncoal exploration outside an existing mining permit shall file with the Department a written notice of intention to explore for each exploration area at least 10 days prior to the start of exploration activities on forms provided by the Department.

Except for drilling operations as provided for in § 77.113 (relating to Permit waiver - noncoal exploration drilling), no noncoal exploration activity shall occur except as authorized by either of the following:

(1) A letter from the Department waiving the requirement for a permit.

(2) A permit issued in accordance with the Act and this Chapter.

(b) The notice shall include:

(1) The name, address and telephone number of the person seeking to explore.

(2) **The name, address and telephone number of the representative who will be present at and responsible for conducting the exploration activities.**

~~[(2)]~~ (3) A map, at a scale of 1:24,000, of the exploration area showing the extent of the exploration area and approximate locations of drill holes, exploratory pits, trenches and excavations.

~~[(3)]~~ (4) A statement of the period of intended exploration.

~~[(4)]~~ (5) The method of exploration and types of equipment to be used.

~~[(5)]~~ (6) The purpose of testing.

~~[(6)]~~ (7) The amount of mineral ~~[needed for testing (if exploration is by test pit, trench or excavation).]~~ **to be removed.**

(8) A description of the practices proposed to be followed to prevent adverse impacts to the environment as a result of the exploration activities.

(9) A blast plan if explosives are to be used.

~~[(e) Exploration by drilling methods may proceed 10 days after the notice of intent to explore form is submitted to the Department unless notified otherwise by the Department to provide other information to assure compliance with the environmental acts (for example—the location of access roads) or if the area is located within the distance~~

limitations of § 77.504 (relating to distance limitations and areas designated unsuitable for mining)]

~~(d)~~ **c**) The Department will, except as otherwise provided in § 77.124 (relating to public availability of information in permit applications), place the notices on public file and make them available for public inspection and copying during regular office hours at the established fee.

~~(e)~~ **d**) ~~[A person who intends to conduct noncoal exploration operations in which noncoal minerals will be removed shall, prior to conducting the exploration, obtain a permit under this chapter. Prior to removal of minerals, the Department may waive the requirement for the permit to enable the testing and analysis of noncoal properties.]~~ A noncoal mining permit is required to remove greater than 20 tons of material from one site. ~~(e)~~ The Department may grant a waiver for a noncoal mining permit if the material removed from the site will be less than 20 tons. In granting a waiver, the Department will consider:

(1) The method of exploration proposed

(2) The potential for adversely affecting wetlands, streams or water supplies and the designated uses and quality of the receiving stream.

~~(f)~~ **e**) A person who conducts noncoal exploration activities will observe the distance limitations under § 77.504 (relating to distance limitations and areas designated unsuitable for mining).

~~(g)~~ **f**) Exploration activities shall be conducted to accomplish the following:

- (1) To minimize environmental impacts on roadways and vegetation.
- (2) To provide erosion controls for excavated areas, including access roads, in accordance with Chapter 102 (relating to erosion and sediment control).
- (3) To avoid disturbance of wetland areas.

~~(h)~~ **g**) The areas affected by the noncoal exploration shall be graded to approximate original contour ~~[when possible or restored to a slope not to exceed 35° unless approved by the Department § 77.594(2)(v) (relating to final slopes)]~~ within 30 days after completion of exploration, and will contain no depressions which will impound water. Drill holes shall be sealed under § 77.503 (relating to casing and sealing of drilled holes). The affected areas shall be revegetated within the first planting season after completion of exploration.

~~(i)~~ **h**) Noncoal exploration activities shall be subject to the applicable inspection and enforcement provisions of the Department, and Subchapters E and F (relating to civil penalties for noncoal mining activities; and enforcement and inspection).

(i) Blasting in connection with noncoal exploration activity and/or a permit waiver granted for this activity must comply with the requirements of Chapters 210 (relating to Blaster's license) and 211 (relating to the storage, handling and use of explosives).

(j) Information will be made available to the public as follows.

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), information submitted to the Department under this section will be made available for public inspection and copying at the appropriate district mining office.

(2) Information which pertains only to the analysis of the chemical and physical properties of the mineral (except information regarding the mineral or elemental content that is potentially toxic to the environment) will be kept confidential and will not be made a matter of public record.

§ 77.113 Permit waiver - noncoal exploration drilling.

(a) Drilling that is done solely for the purpose of exploration whereby only the drilled material is removed from the site does not require a permit. The provisions of § 77.109 apply. Exploration by drilling methods may proceed 10 days after the notice of intent to explore is received by the Department except if the following applies:

(1) The applicant is notified by the Department to provide additional information to assure compliance with the environmental acts

(2) The area is located within the distance limitations of § 77.504 (relating to distance limitations and areas designated unsuitable for mining).

(b) All drill holes must be sealed upon completion or finished as specified in the exploration plan. Drill holes may be used as monitoring wells or water wells provided that the wells are properly constructed and developed for their intended purposes.

§ 77.121. Public notices of filing of permit applications.

(a) At the time of filing an application with the Department, an applicant for a permit, transfer, renewal or revision under § 77.142 (relating to public notice of permit revision) shall place an advertisement in a local newspaper of general circulation in the locality of the proposed noncoal mining activities once a week for 4 consecutive weeks. The advertisement shall contain the following information:

(1) The name and business address of the applicant.

(2) The ~~[township]~~ municipality and county in which the operation is located. **If the operation spans multiple jurisdictions, then each municipality shall be listed.**

(c) During the public notification period, the applicant shall notify each property owner within the proposed permit area, by ~~[registered]~~ certified mail, of the proposed permit except for surface landowners who have a completed Consent of Landowner form submitted with the application.

(d) Upon ~~[receipt]~~ acceptance of an ~~[complete]~~ application for review, the Department will publish notice of the proposed activities in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

(e) Upon ~~[receipt]~~ acceptance of an ~~[complete]~~ application for review, the Department will notify:

(1) ~~[the city, borough, incorporated town or township]~~ each municipality in which the activities are located.

(2) Federal, State and local government agencies with jurisdiction over or an interest in the area of the proposed activities.

(f) The content of the notice shall include:

(1) The application number.

(2) The name and business address of the applicant.

(3) ~~[The township]~~ Each municipality and county in which the operation is located.

(4) The receiving streams.

(5) A brief description of the operation and the location.

(6) The location where a copy of the application may be inspected.

(7) Where comments on the application may be submitted.

§ 77.123. Public hearings—informal conferences.

(a) A person having an interest that is, or may be, adversely affected may request in writing that the Department hold a public hearing or an informal conference on an application for a permit. The request shall:

(1) Briefly summarize the issues to be raised by the requestor at the public hearing or informal conference.

(2) Be filed with the Department within 30 days after the last publication of the newspaper advertisement placed by the applicant under § 77.121(a) (relating to public notices of filing of permit applications) or within 30 days of receipt of notice by the public entities to whom notification is provided under § 77.121(~~d~~) e).

(b) Except as provided in subsection (c), if a public hearing or an informal conference is requested under subsection (a), the Department will hold a public hearing or an informal conference within 60 days following ~~the receipt of the request~~ **the close of the public comment period provided under § 77.122 (a)**. The public hearing or informal conference will be conducted as follows:

(1) The public hearing or informal conference shall be held in the locality of the proposed mining operation.

(2) The date, time and location of the public hearing or informal conference shall be advertised by the Department in a newspaper of general circulation in the locality of the proposed mine at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled public hearing or informal conference.

(3) The public hearing or informal conference shall be conducted by a representative of the Department who may accept oral or written statements and other relevant information from a party to the public hearing or informal conference.

(c) If the parties requesting the public hearing or informal conference agree to withdraw their request, the public hearing or informal conference need not be held.

(d) Informal conferences held under § 77.504 (relating to distance limitations and areas designated as unsuitable for mining) may be used by the Department as the public hearing or informal conference required under proposed uses or relocation of public highways.

(e) **After the public hearing or informal conference, [F] the Department will prepare a summary report regarding the comments submitted. This document will be made available to the public prior to, or upon approval or denial of, the application. [give its findings of the public hearing or informal conference to the permit applicant and to each person who**

~~is a party to the public hearing or informal conference within 60 days of the public hearings or informal conference.]~~

(f) Within 60 days of the public hearing or informal conference, the Department will notify the applicant of its decision to approve or disapprove or of its intent to disapprove subject to the submission of additional information.

§ 77.128. Permit terms.

(b) A permit will terminate if the permittee has not begun the noncoal mining activities covered by the permit within ~~[3]~~ 5 years of the issuance of the permit. The Department may grant reasonable extensions of time for commencement of these activities upon receipt of a written statement showing that the extensions of time are necessary if litigation precludes the commencement or threatens substantial economic loss to the permittee or if there are conditions beyond the control and without the fault or negligence of the permittee. Requests for extensions shall be submitted to the Department prior to expiration of the permit. If a permit has not been activated within ~~[3]~~ 5 years, ~~[or the permittee has not been granted an extension, the permittee may apply for a permit renewal]~~ that includes updated permit information as described in § 77.146 (relating to reporting of new information) must be included.

§ 77.141. Permit revisions.

(a) A revision to a permit shall be obtained for a change to the noncoal mining activities, as defined by the Department, set forth in the application.

~~[(b) The permittee shall submit the application for permit revisions which require public notification to the Department at least 180 days before undertaking the change. In emergency situations, the Department may waive the 180-day requirement.]~~

~~[(e)b]~~ An application for revision shall be complete as described in § 77.105 (relating to application contents) and contain the following information:

- (1) The permittee's name and address and permit number.
- (2) A description of the proposed revisions, including appropriate maps, plans and application modules to demonstrate that the proposed revision complies with the act[s], the environmental acts and this chapter.

~~[(d)c]~~ The Department will approve or disapprove the ~~[complete]~~ application for revision under § 77.127 (relating to final permit action).

([e]d) Except for an insignificant boundary correction, [~~Revisions to change permit boundaries for support facilities may be considered by the Department~~] the addition of acreage for support activities is subject to review via the same procedures as an application for a new permit but will be processed as a revision to the existing permit. The permittee must demonstrate the need for the support facilities.

([f]e) Except for an insignificant boundary correction, [~~T~~]the addition of acreage for mineral extraction is subject to review via the same procedure as an application for a new permit but [shall] may be [~~considered~~] processed as a [~~n application for a new permit,~~] revision to an existing permit, [~~except if the Department deems the area to be an insignificant boundary correction,~~] with consideration to the following:

(1) Effect on public health and safety

(2) Effect on the hydrologic balance

(3) Improvement to or logical extension of the existing overall operations and reclamation plan

(4) Applicability for issuance of a new individual permit for the additional area.

(f) Any permit revision for circumstances described under § 77.142 (relating to public notice of permit revision) is a major revision and is subject to the provisions of § 77.102 (b) (relating to compliance with existing permits). The Department may require that any major revision include an update of parts of the permit application to reflect current conditions or requirements including bond liability.

(g) [~~A permit renewal application shall be filed under § 77.143 (relating to permit renewals).~~] The Department may require a permit revision prior to the expiration date in response to the following:

(1) Unanticipated impacts that affect public health, safety or the environment have occurred or are expected to occur as a result of the mining activity,

(2) The permittee has deviated or must deviate from the approved operational information or reclamation plan

(3) Changes in surrounding land uses have occurred that will affect the authorized post-mining land use.

(4) New information reported under § 77.146 meets the criteria for public notice, as required under § 77.142 (related to public notice of permit revision).

(h) When a major revision, as described in § 77.141(f), is approved prior to the expiration date of the permit, the permit will be reissued with a new permit term

and expiration date based on the information supplied in support of the major revision request.

§ 77.142. Public notice of permit revision.

(a) A permit revision request is subject to the notice requirements of § 77.121 (relating to public notices of filing of permit applications) under the following circumstances:

(1) For surface mining activities:

(i) Discharging to a different watershed or a change in water treatment facility design which would result in a change in effluent limits or additional discharge points.

(ii) The change of postmining land use.

(iii) A change in the type of reclamation (for example—approximate original contour, terrace, water impoundment or other alternative reclamation).

(iv) A physical change in the mine configuration. Physical changes include, **but are not limited to,** stream diversion structures, new or expanded haul road connections to a public highway, **permit area additions,** elimination of public highways and increases in approved pit depth.

(v) The addition of blasting to the operation.

(vi) The addition of mineral processing to the mining activity.

(2) For underground mining activities:

(i) Discharging to a different watershed or a change in water treatment facility design which would result in a change in effluent limits or additional discharge points.

(ii) A physical change in the mine configuration. Physical changes include stream diversion structures, new or expanded haul road connections to a public highway, elimination of public highways and new openings.

(iii) A change to the postmining land use.

(iv) The addition of mineral processing to the mining activity.

(b) Initiation of new mining or support area is subject to public notice if the plan includes a lateral or vertical change to the previously authorized permit area. Incremental mining within the permit area, as described in the permit application, is not subject to public notice.

(c) Deletion of area from within the permit boundary, with the exception of final bond release area, does not require public notice provided that the applicant can demonstrate that the area has not been affected by surface mining activity other than drilling for exploration purposes.

§ 77.143. Permit renewals.

(a) *NPDES permit renewals.* An application for renewal of an NPDES permit shall be filed with the Department at least 180 days before the expiration date of the NPDES permit in question. A renewal application shall be filed in the format required by the Department.

(b) *Mine permit renewals—general requirements.*

(1) A valid, existing permit issued by the Department will carry with it the presumption of successive renewals upon expiration of the term of the permit. Successive renewals will be available only for areas which were specifically approved by the Department on the application for the existing permit.

(2) A permit renewal will not be available for extending the acreage of the operation beyond the boundaries of the permit area approved under the existing permit. Addition of acreage to the operation will be considered **[a new application] under § 77.141(f) (relating to permit revisions).** A request for permit revision may accompany a request for renewal and shall be supported with the information required for application as described in this chapter.

(8) The Department will ~~[send copies of its decision to]~~ **notify** the applicant, persons who filed objections or comments to the renewal and ~~[to]~~ persons who were parties to an informal conference held on the permit renewal **of the Department's decision.**

§ 77.144. Transfer of permit.

(a) ~~[A]~~ **No** transfer, assignment or sale of the rights granted under a permit may ~~[not]~~ be made, except as provided in this section.

(b) Permits may be reissued in a new name, **without transfer,** if there is no change in legal entity.

(c) The Department may ~~[allow a permittee to]~~ **approve the** transfer **of** a permit to another operator if the successor operator:

(1) Meets the requirements of § 77.126(a)(6)-(9) (relating to criteria for permit approval or denial).

(2) Assumes liability for reclamation, water pollution, planting and other responsibilities under the law, rules and regulations and the terms and conditions of the permit from the date of original issuance of the permit.

(3) Furnishes the Department with an appropriate bond in the amount specified by the Department under Subchapter D (relating to bonding and insurance requirements).

(4) Submits proof of publication as required by § 77.121 (relating to public notices of filing of permit applications) **with the exception of permits issued under § 77.108 (related to permits for small noncoal operations).**

(5) Submits additional information to enable the Department to determine that the applicant is able to operate the mine in a manner complying with the environmental acts.

§ 77.224. Special terms and conditions for collateral bonds.

(c) A collateral bond pledging certificates of deposit is subject to the following conditions:

(1) The Department will require that certificates of deposit be assigned to the Department, in writing, and that the assignment be recorded upon the books of the bank issuing the certificates.

(2) The Department will not accept an individual certificate of deposit for a denomination in excess of [~~\$100,000, or~~] the maximum insurable amount as determined by the FDIC and FSLIC.

§ 77.231. Terms and conditions for liability insurance.

(b) The insurance shall **be written on an occurrence basis and** provide for personal injury and property damage protection in a total amount determined by the Department on a case by case basis, and adequate to compensate persons injured or property damaged as a result of the permittee's mining and reclamation operations and entitled to compensation under Pennsylvania law.

(d) The insurance shall include a rider requiring that the insurer notify the Department whenever substantive changes are made affecting [in] the adequacy of the policy, including termination or failure to renew.

(e) Minimum insurance coverage for bodily injury shall be [~~\$300,000~~] \$500,000 per person and [~~\$500,000~~] \$1,000,000 [aggregate] per occurrence. [and m] Minimum insurance coverage for property damage shall be [~~\$300,000~~] \$500,000 [for each occurrence] per person and [~~\$500,000~~] \$1,000,000 [aggregate] per occurrence.

(h) The certificate holder shall be [solely] the Department.

§ 77.242. Procedures for seeking release of bond.

(f) *Public hearing.* The Department will schedule a public hearing or informal conference if written objections are filed and a public hearing or informal conference is requested. The public hearing or informal conference shall be held in the locality of the permit area for which bond release is sought.

(1) Notice of a public hearing or informal conference shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the locality of the public hearing or informal conference, at least 2 weeks before the date of the public hearing or conference.

(2) The public hearing or informal conference will be held within 30 days from the date of the notice.

(3) An electronic or stenographic record may be made of the public hearing or informal conference and the record maintained for access by the parties, until final release of the bond, if requested in advance by a party in the public hearing or informal conference.

(g) *Review by Department.* Department review and decision will be as follows:

(1) The Department will consider, during inspection, evaluation and public hearing or informal conference decisions:

(i) Whether the permittee has met the criteria for release of the bond under § 77.243.

(ii) Whether the permittee has satisfactorily completed the requirements of the reclamation plan, or relevant portions thereof, and complied with the requirements of the act, this chapter and the conditions of the permit.

(iii) Whether pollution of surface and subsurface water is occurring or the continuance of present pollution, and the estimated cost of abating pollution.

(2) If a public hearing or informal conference has not been held under subsection (~~[(e)]f~~), the Department will notify the permittee in writing of its decision to release or not to release all or part of the bond.

§ 77.293. Penalties.

(a) *Cessation order.* The Department will assess a civil penalty of up to \$5,000 per day for each violation **of the act** which leads to a cessation order. If a violation involves a failure to correct within the period prescribed for its correction, a violation for which a cessation order or other abatement order has been issued, a civil penalty of at least \$750 will be assessed for each day the violation continues beyond the period prescribed for its correction.

(b) *Civil penalty.*

(1) The Department may assess a civil penalty of up to \$1000 per day for each violation **of the act**, unless the operator demonstrates with clear and convincing evidence that the violations:

- (i) Result in no environmental damage.
- (ii) Result in no injury to persons or property.
- (iii) Are corrected within the required time prescribed for its abatement.

(2) If the violation involves a failure to correct within the period prescribed for its correction, a violation for which a cessation order or other abatement order was not issued, a civil penalty of at least \$250 will be assessed for each day the violation continues beyond the period prescribed for its correction.

(3) For violations of the Clean Streams Law, the Department may assess a penalty of up to \$10,000 per day. The statutory maximum penalties are cumulative.

§ 77.301. Procedures for assessment of civil penalties.

(a) *Initial review.* When the Department determines that a civil penalty will be assessed, it will make an initial review of the violation and will serve a copy of the results of the initial review, including the civil penalty computations, on the party responsible for the

violation. The service will be by [~~registered~~] **certified** mail within [~~30~~] **45** days of the Department's [~~knowledge~~] **issuance** of the **notice of** violation **or order**.

(d) *Service*. The Department will serve a copy of the civil penalty assessment on the person responsible for a violation as follows:

(1) Upon the failure of the assessed party to timely request an assessment conference on the results of the initial review.

(2) Upon the completion of an assessment conference, or upon review of timely submitted information for review by the Department, if the Department does not decide to vacate the penalty. The service will be [~~registered or~~] by certified mail, or by personal service. If the mail is tendered at the address of the assessed person set forth [~~in~~] **on** the sign required under § 77.502 (relating to signs and markers), or at an address at which that person is in fact located, and the person refuses to accept delivery of or to collect the mail, the requirements of this paragraph will be deemed to have been complied with upon that tender.

§ 77.410. Maps, cross sections and related information.

(a) An application shall contain maps and plans of the proposed permit area and within 1,000 feet of the permit area, except as otherwise designated by the Department, showing the following:

(11) The municipality [~~or township~~] and county.

(12) The elevation and location of test borings and core samplings.

(13) The location and extent of existing or previously deep or surface[~~d~~] mined areas.

§ 77.531. Dams, ponds, embankments and impoundments—design, construction and maintenance.

(a) Dams, ponds, embankments and impoundments shall be designed, constructed and maintained in accordance with the [~~Soil~~] **Natural Resources** Conservation Service Engineering Standard # 350 “Pond” and if applicable, Chapter 105 (relating to dam safety and waterway management).

(b) A facility under subsection (a) shall be designed and certified to the Department by a qualified registered professional engineer, if required by Chapter 105, or qualified registered land surveyor.

§ 77.532. Surface water and groundwater monitoring.

(c) In addition to the monitoring and reporting requirements established by the Department under Chapter 92a (relating to National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permitting, Monitoring and Compliance), surface water shall be monitored to accurately measure and record the water quantity and quality of the discharges from the permit area and the effect of the discharge on the receiving waters when requested by the Department. The Department will approve the nature of data, frequency of collection, reporting requirements and the duration of the monitoring programs.

§ 77.562. Preblasting surveys.

(a) Preblasting surveys will not be required if blasting is designed and conducted below the levels of blasting vibration shown on Figure #1 at the nearest dwelling, school, church, commercial or institutional building neither owned nor leased by the operator. If preblasting surveys are not conducted, the operator shall provide a seismograph record including both the particle velocity time-history (wave form) and the particle velocity and vibration frequency levels for each blast.

(b) If the operator intends to conduct blasting at vibration levels exceeding the levels of vibration in figure #1 at the nearest dwelling, school, church, commercial or institutional building neither owned nor leased by the operator, the operator shall offer preblasting surveys. At least 30 days before commencement of blasting or resumption of blasting in accordance with § 77.562(a)(3)(i) the operator shall notify, in writing, the residents or owners of dwellings or other structures located within 1,000 feet (304.8 meters) of the area where blasting will occur of their right to request a preblasting survey and how to request a preblasting survey. On the request to the Department or operator by a resident or owner of a dwelling or structure that is located within 1,000 feet (304.8 meters) of the area where blasting will occur, the operator shall promptly conduct a preblasting survey of the dwelling or structure. If a dwelling or structure is renovated or added to subsequent to a preblasting survey, then, upon request by the resident or

owner to the Department or operator, a survey of the additions and renovations shall be performed by the operator in accordance with this section. The operator shall provide the Department with a copy of the request.

§ 77.563. Public notice of blasting schedule.

(a) *Blasting schedule publication.*

(1) Copies of the schedule shall be distributed by mail to local governments and to public utilities within 1000 feet of the blasting area.

(2) The blasting schedule shall be revised, published and distributed in accordance with this section. Advice on requesting a preblasting survey need not be provided to parties advised in the original distribution under subsection (a)(1).

§ 77.564. Surface blasting requirements.

(f) Airblasts shall be controlled so that they do not exceed the noise level specified in this subsection at a dwelling, public building, school, church or commercial or institutional structure, unless the structure is owned by the person who conducts the surface mining activities and is not leased to another person. The lessee may sign a waiver relieving the operator from meeting the airblast limitations of this subsection.

(1) [~~Maximum allowable noise levels.~~

Lower Frequency Limits of Measuring System	Maximum Level in dB
.1 Hz or lower flat response	134 peak
2 Hz or lower flat response	133 peak
6 Hz or lower flat response	129 peak
e-weighted, slow response	105C

The maximum allowable noise level is 133 dBL.

(2) *Exceptions.* The Department may specify lower maximum allowable airblast levels than those in this subsection for use in the vicinity of a specific blasting operation, if necessary.

(3) *Monitoring.* The operator shall conduct periodic monitoring to ensure compliance with the airblast standards. The Department may require an airblast measurement of a blast, and may specify the location of the requirements.

(8) When a shot is about to be set off or fired, machinery within a radius of 500 feet, or ~~[a lesser]~~ **an alternative** distance specified by the Department, shall be brought to a complete rest, work shall cease within the confines of this area and workmen shall retreat to a safe location. This paragraph shall apply when the blaster first begins to wire the shot.

(i) In blasting operations, except as otherwise authorized in this section, the maximum peak particle velocity may not exceed **the levels of blasting vibration shown in Figure #1 [2.0 inches per second]** at the location of a dwelling, public building, school, church or commercial or institutional building or other structure designated by the Department. The maximum peak particle velocity shall be the largest of three measurements. The Department may reduce the maximum peak particle velocity allowed, if it determines that a lower standard is required because of density of population or land use, age or type of structure, geology or hydrology of the area, frequency of blasts or other factors.

(j) The maximum peak particle velocity limitation of subsection (i) does not apply at a structure owned

(k) When seismographs are not used to monitor peak particle velocity, the maximum weight of explosives to be detonated within any 8 millisecond~~[or greater]~~ period may be determined by the formula ~~$W = (d/50)^2$~~ **$W = (d/90)^2$** where W equals the maximum weight of explosives, in pounds, that can be detonated in any 8 millisecond period ~~[or greater]~~, and **d** equals the distance, in feet, from the blast to the nearest dwelling, school, church, commercial or institutional building. The development of a modified scale-distance factor may be authorized by the Department on receipt of a written request by the operator, supported by seismographic records of blasting at the mine site. If the peak particle velocity will exceed .5 inch per second with the adjusted scale-distance, § 77.562(d) shall be complied with prior to blasting at the adjusted levels.

§ 77.565. Records of blasting operations.

A record of each blast shall be retained for at least 3 years and shall be available for inspection by the Department. Seismographic reports, if applicable, shall be made a part of that record. The record shall include the following data:

- (10) The total weight, **in pounds** of explosives used.
- (11) The maximum weight of explosives detonated per **8 millisecond** delay interval.
- (12) The maximum number of holes detonated per **8 millisecond** delay interval.

- (16) The **total quantity and** type of delay detonator and delay periods used.
- (17) The sketch **showing the number of holes, burden, spacing, and pattern dimensions** of the delay pattern **and point of initiation**.
- (18) The number of persons in the blasting crew.
- (19) The seismograph[**ie**] and airblast records, when required, including the type of instrument, sensitivity and calibration signal of the gain setting and certification of annual calibration and the following:
 - (i) The seismograph[**ie**] or airblast level reading, or both, including exact location of the seismograph, its distance from the blast and the name of the property.
 - (ii) The name of the person taking the seismograph reading.
 - (iii) The name of person and firm analyzing the seismograph[**ie**] record.
- (20) The reasons and conditions for an unscheduled blast.
- (21) The total number of blasting caps used.
- (22) The scaled distance.**
- (23) The location(s) of the seismograph(s), when required.**
- (24) The type of circuit, if electric detonation is used.**

§ 77.593. Alternatives to contouring.

Alternative reclamation to approximate original contour may be authorized as follows:

(1) The applicant shall demonstrate that the proposed operation will be carried out over a substantial period of time and that the volume of mineral to be removed is large compared to the overburden to restore the area to approximate original contour. The applicant shall provide a description of the alternative and demonstrate that:

(i) The alternative to contouring [~~is likely to~~] can be achieved.

(ii) The alternative poses no actual or potential threat to public health or safety.

(iii) The alternative poses no actual or potential threat to water diminution, contamination, interruption or pollution.

(iv) The alternative is consistent with applicable land use policies, plans and programs.

(v) The alternative is consistent with Federal, State or local law.

(vi) The alternative is [~~capable of supporting~~] the highest or best use [~~it~~] that can reasonably be supported after mining and reclamation is completed.

(2) If the applicant does not meet the requirements of subsection (~~a~~) 1, an alternative to contouring may be authorized if the applicant demonstrates that the operation will either restore the land affected to a condition capable of supporting the uses it was capable of supporting prior to mining or to a higher or better use. The applicant shall demonstrate that:

§ 77.618. Standards for successful revegetation.

(a) When the approved postmining land use is cropland:

(1) The standards for successful revegetation shall be based upon crop productivity or yield.

(2) The approved standard shall be the average yields per acre for the crop and soil type as specified in the Soil Surveys of the United States Department of Agriculture [~~Soil~~] Natural Resources Conservation Service.

(3) The productivity or yield of the mined area shall be equal to or greater than the approved standard for the last two consecutive growing seasons of the 5-year responsibility period established in § 77.615 (relating to species). Productivity or yield shall be considered equal if production or yield is at least 90% of the approved standard.

(b) When the approved postmining land use is other than cropland:

(1) The standards for successful revegetation shall be determined by ground cover.

(2) The approved standard shall be the percent ground cover of the vegetation which exists on the proposed area to be affected by surface mining activities. The Department will not approve less than a minimum of 70% ground cover of permanent plant species with not more than 1% of the area having less than 30% ground cover with no single or contiguous area having less than 30% ground cover exceeding 3000 square feet. When woody species are planted in mixture with herbaceous species, these standards shall be met and a minimum of 400 woody plants per acre shall be established unless alternate plans are approved or required by the Department. On slopes greater than 20 degrees, the minimum number of woody plants shall be 600 per acre.

(3) The percent of ground cover of the mined area shall meet the standards of paragraph (2) to qualify for Reclamation Stage I and Reclamation Stage II approval.

(4) For purposes of this subsection, the term “herbaceous species” means grasses, legumes and nonleguminous forbs. The term “woody plants” means woody shrubs, trees and vines.

§ 77.654. Cleanup.

Upon completion of mining, the operator shall remove and [~~cleanup~~] **clean up** temporary unused structures, facilities, equipment, machines, tools, parts or other materials, property, debris or junk that were used in or resulted from the surface mining activity.

§ 77.655. Closing of underground mine openings.

(a) *Mine openings.*

(1) Upon completion of mining, a mine opening, except those approved for water monitoring or otherwise managed in a manner approved by the Department, shall be closed:

(i) To prevent degradation of surface waters and groundwaters.

(ii) To assist in returning the groundwater as near to its premining level as possible.

(iii) To assist in returning the hydrologic balance as near to its premining condition as possible [~~to prevent access to underground workings~~].

(iv) To ensure the safety of people.

(v) to prevent access to underground workings.

§ 77.807. Change of ownership.

For an activity requiring registration under this section, an amended registration shall be filed if there is a [~~change~~] **change** of ownership of the entity conducting the surface mining activities.