

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2016 REGULAR SESSION**

### **ENROLLED**

## **House Bill 4726**

(BY SMITH, R., IRELAND, PHILLIPS, CAPUTO, ELDRIDGE,  
ANDERSON, BOGGS, EVANS, D., AMBLER, LYNCH,  
ZATEZALO, UPSON, CADLE, WHITE, P., MCCUSKEY AND  
STORCH)

[Passed March 11, 2016; in effect ninety days from passage.]



1 AN ACT to repeal §22-3A-1, §22-3A-2, §22-3A-3, §22-3A-4, §22-3A-5, §22-3A-6, §22-  
2 3A-7, §22-3A-8, §22-3A-9 and §22-3A-10 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as  
3 amended; to amend and reenact §16-4C-6c of said code; to amend and reenact  
4 §22-1-7 of said code; to amend and reenact §22-3-2, §22-3-4, §22-3-13, §22-3-  
5 13a, §22-3-22a and §22-3-30a of said code; to amend said code by adding thereto  
6 six new sections, designated §22-3-34, §22-3-35, §22-3-36, §22-3-37 and §22-3-  
7 38; to amend and reenact §22-11-6 of said code; to amend and reenact §22A-1-13,  
8 §22A-1-14, §22A-1-15, §22A-1-19, §22A-1-20, §22A-1-31 and §22A-1-35 of said  
9 code; to amend and reenact §22A-1A-2 of said code; to amend and reenact §22A-  
10 2-3, §22A-2-8, §22A-2-14, §22A-2-20, §22A-2-25, §22A-2-36, §22A-2-55, §22A-  
11 2-66 and §22A-2-77 of said code; and to amend and reenact §22A-7-7 of said  
12 code, all relating generally to coal mining; making findings; eliminating the  
13 Department of Environmental Protection Office of Explosives and Blasting and  
14 consolidating the remaining duties and responsibilities related to blasting to the  
15 Department of Environmental Protection Division of Mining and Reclamation;  
16 adding blasting oversight; providing that the Department of Environmental  
17 Protection to revise rules on hydrologic protection and stormwater runoff analyses  
18 on mining operations and to promulgate rules that conform with the federal  
19 regulations requirements to minimize the disturbances to the prevailing hydrologic  
20 balance at a mine site and in associated off-site areas; providing that cumulative  
21 hydrologic impact assessment may be conducted; requiring a statement of  
22 probable hydrologic consequences and to prevent flooding; modifying certain  
23 findings, ventilation requirements, and roof or rib requirements; requiring the

24 Department of Environmental Protection to follow deadlines for approving or  
25 denying applications for site specific water quality criteria; providing that state mine  
26 rescue teams may serve as backup mine rescue teams for mines in this state;  
27 providing that the Board of Mine Health and Safety to have the authority to propose  
28 rules for the use of diesel equipment in the state's mines; transferring certification  
29 authority to the Director of the Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training for  
30 mining emergency medical technicians; requiring the State Board of Appeals to  
31 allow evidence of testing procedures and test results be introduced through  
32 notarized affidavits from Medical Review Officers and testify if necessary; providing  
33 for telephonic testimony under oath; providing that the penalty for not reporting  
34 accidents in fifteen minutes to the Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training be  
35 modified to up to \$100,000; providing that the Director of Office of Miners' Health,  
36 Safety and Training shall have the authority to modify assessed penalties and  
37 penalties may be modified by the State Board of Appeals based on a vote of two  
38 Board members; providing a method in case a miners' wireless emergency  
39 communications device fails; and allowing company input into state supervisory  
40 training and how it is scheduled during the year.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

1 That §22-3A-1, §22-3A-2, §22-3A-3, §22-3A-4, §22-3A-5, §22-3A-6, §22-3A-7, §22-3A-  
2 8, §22-3A-9 and §22-3A-10 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be repealed; that  
3 §16-4C-6c of said code be amended and reenacted; that §22-1-7 of said code be amended and  
4 reenacted; that §22-3-2, §22-3-4, §22-3-13, §22-3-13a, §22-3-22a, §22-3-30a of said code be  
5 amended and reenacted; that said code be amended by adding thereto six new sections,  
6 designated §22-3-34, §22-3-35, §22-3-36, §22-3-37 and §22-3-38; that §22-11-6 of said code be

7 amended and reenacted; that §22A-1-13, §22A-1-14, §22A-1-15, §22A-1-19, §22A-1-20, §22A-  
8 1-31 and §22A-1-35 of said code be amended and reenacted; that §22A-1A-2 of said code be  
9 amended and reenacted; that §22A-2-3, §22A-2-8, §22A-2-14, §22A-2-20, §22A-2-25, §22A-2-  
10 36, §22A-2-55, §22A-2-66 and §22A-2-77 of said code be amended and reenacted; and that  
11 §22A-7-7 of said code be amended and reenacted; all to read as follows:

## **CHAPTER 16. PUBLIC HEALTH.**

### **ARTICLE 4C. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES ACT.**

#### **§16-4C-6c. Certification requirements for emergency medical technician-mining.**

1 (a) Commencing July 1, 2016, an applicant for certification as an emergency medical  
2 technician-mining shall:

- 3 (1) Be at least eighteen years old;
- 4 (2) Apply on a form prescribed by the Director of Miners' Health, Safety and Training;
- 5 (3) Pay the application fee;
- 6 (4) Possess a valid cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification;
- 7 (5) Successfully complete an emergency medical technician-mining education program  
8 authorized by the Director of Miners' Health, Safety and Training in consultation with the Board of  
9 Miner Training, Education and Certification; and
- 10 (6) Successfully complete emergency medical technician-mining cognitive and skills  
11 examinations authorized by the Director of Miners' Health, Safety and Training in consultation  
12 with the Board of Miner Training, Education and Certification.

13 (b) The emergency medical technician-mining certification is valid for three years.

14 (c) A certified emergency medical technician-mining may only practice on mining  
15 operations, as defined in section three, article thirteen-c, chapter eleven of this Code.

16 (d) To be recertified as an emergency medical technician-mining, a certificate holder shall:

- 17 (1) Apply on a form prescribed by the Director of Miners' Health, Safety and Training;

18 (2) Pay the application fee;

19 (3) Possess a valid cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification;

20 (4) Successfully complete one of the following:

21 (A) A one-time thirty-two hour emergency medical technician- mining recertification course  
22 authorized by the Director of Miners' Health, Safety and Training in consultation with the Board of  
23 Miner Training, Education and Certification; or

24 (B) Three annual eight-hour retraining and testing programs authorized by the Director of  
25 Miners' Health, Safety and Training in consultation with the Board of Miner Training, Education  
26 and Certification; and

27 (5) Successfully complete emergency medical technician-I mining cognitive and skills  
28 recertification examinations authorized by the Director of Miners' Health, Safety and Training in  
29 consultation with the Board of Miner Training, Education and Certification.

30 (e) The education program, training, courses, and cognitive and skills examinations  
31 required for certification and recertification as an emergency medical technician-miner, also  
32 known as emergency medical technician-mining, in existence on January 1, 2014, shall remain in  
33 effect for the certification and recertification of emergency medical technician-industrial until they  
34 are changed by legislative rule by the commissioner in consultation with the Board of Miner  
35 Training, Education and Certification.

36 (f) The administration of the emergency medical technician mining certification and  
37 recertification program by the Director of Miners' Health, Safety and Training shall be done in  
38 consultation with the Board of Miner Training, Education and Certification.

39 (g) The Director of Miners' Health, Safety and Training shall propose rules for legislative  
40 approval, pursuant to the provisions of article three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code, in  
41 consultation with the Board of Miner Training, Education and Certification, and may propose  
42 emergency rules, to:

43 (1) Establish emergency medical technician-mining certification and recertification  
44 courses and examinations;

45 (2) Authorize providers to administer the certification and recertification courses and  
46 examinations, including mine training personnel, independent trainers, community and technical  
47 colleges, and Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESA): *Provided*, That the mine training  
48 personnel and independent trainers must have a valid cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)  
49 certification and must be an approved MSHA or OSHA certified instructor;

50 (3) Establish a fee schedule: *Provided*, That the application fee may not exceed \$10 and  
51 there shall be no fee for a certificate; and

52 (4) Implement the provisions of this section.

## **CHAPTER 22. ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES.**

### **ARTICLE 1. DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.**

#### **§22-1-7. Offices within division.**

1 Consistent with the provisions of this article, the secretary shall, at a minimum, maintain  
2 the following offices within the division:

3 (1) The Office of Abandoned Mine Lands and Reclamation, which is charged, at a  
4 minimum, with administering and enforcing, under the supervision of the secretary, the provisions  
5 of article two of this chapter;

6 (2) The Division of Mining and Reclamation, which is charged, at a minimum, with  
7 administering and enforcing, under the supervision of the secretary, the provisions of articles three  
8 and four of this chapter;

9 (3) The Division of Air Quality, which is charged, at a minimum, with administering and  
10 enforcing, under the supervision of the secretary, the provisions of article five of this chapter;

11 (4) The Office of Oil and Gas, which is charged, at a minimum, with administering and  
12 enforcing, under the supervision of the secretary, the provisions of articles six, seven, eight, nine  
13 and ten of this chapter; and

14 (5) The Division of Water and Waste Management, which is charged, at a minimum, with  
15 administering and enforcing, under the supervision of the secretary, the provisions of articles  
16 eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen and twenty of  
17 this chapter

**ARTICLE 3. SURFACE COAL MINING AND RECLAMATION ACT.**

**§22-3-2. Legislative findings and purpose; jurisdiction vested in Division of Environmental  
Protection; authority of secretary; inter-departmental cooperation.**

1 (a) The Legislature finds that it is essential to the economic and social well-being of the  
2 citizens of the State of West Virginia to strike a careful balance between the protection of the  
3 environment and the economical mining of coal needed to meet energy requirements.

4 (1) Further, the Legislature finds that there is great diversity in terrain, climate, biological,  
5 chemical and other physical conditions in parts of this nation where mining is conducted; that the  
6 State of West Virginia in particular needs an environmentally sound and economically healthy  
7 mining industry; and therefor it may be necessary for the secretary to promulgate rules which vary  
8 from federal regulations as is provided for in sections 101 (f) and 201 (c)(9) of the federal Surface  
9 Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, as amended, "Public Law 95-87."

10 (2) Further, the Legislature finds that unregulated surface coal mining operations may  
11 result in disturbances of surface and underground areas that burden and adversely affect  
12 commerce, public welfare and safety by destroying or diminishing the utility of land for  
13 commercial, industrial, residential, recreational, agricultural and forestry purposes; by causing  
14 erosion and landslides; by contributing to floods; by polluting the water and river and stream beds;  
15 by destroying fish, aquatic life and wildlife habitats; by impairing natural beauty; by damaging the  
16 property of citizens; by creating hazards dangerous to life and property; and by degrading the  
17 quality of life in local communities, all where proper mining and reclamation is not practiced.

18 (3) Further, the Legislature finds that the reasonable control of blasting associated with  
19 surface mining within the State of West Virginia is in the public interest and will promote the  
20 protection of the citizens of the State of West Virginia and their property without sacrificing



21 economic development. It is the policy of the State of West Virginia, in cooperation with other  
22 governmental agencies, public and private organizations, and the citizens of this state, to use  
23 reasonable means and measures to prevent harm from the effects of blasting to its property and  
24 citizens.

25 (b) Therefore, it is the purpose of this article to:

26 (1) Expand the established and effective statewide program to protect the public and the  
27 environment from the adverse effects of surface-mining operations;

28 (2) Assure that the rights of surface and mineral owners and other persons with legal  
29 interest in the land or appurtenances to land are adequately protected from the operations;

30 (3) Assure that surface-mining operations are not conducted where reclamation as  
31 required by this article is not feasible;

32 (4) Assure that surface-mining operations are conducted in a manner to adequately  
33 protect the environment;

34 (5) Assure that adequate procedures are undertaken to reclaim surface areas as  
35 contemporaneously as possible with the surface-mining operations;

36 (6) Assure that adequate procedures are provided for public participation where  
37 appropriate under this article;

38 (7) Assure the exercise of the full reach of state common law, statutory and constitutional  
39 powers for the protection of the public interest through effective control of surface-mining  
40 operations;

41 (8) Assure that the coal production essential to the nation's energy requirements and to  
42 the State's economic and social well-being is provided; and

43 (9) Vest in the secretary the authority to enforce all of the laws, regulations and rules  
44 established to regulate blasting consistent with the authority granted in sections thirty-four through  
45 thirty-nine of this article.

46 (c) In recognition of these findings and purposes, the Legislature vests authority in the  
47 secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection to:

48 (1) Administer and enforce the provisions of this article as it relates to surface mining to  
49 accomplish the purposes of this article;

50 (2) Conduct hearings and conferences or appoint persons to conduct them in accordance  
51 with this article;

52 (3) Promulgate, administer and enforce rules pursuant to this article;

53 (4) Enter into a cooperative agreement with the Secretary of the United States Department  
54 of the Interior to provide for state regulation of surface-mining operations on federal lands within  
55 West Virginia consistent with section 523 of the federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation  
56 Act of 1977, as amended; and

57 (5) Administer and enforce rules promulgated pursuant to this chapter to accomplish the  
58 requirements of programs under the federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977,  
59 as amended.

60 (d) The secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection and the director of the  
61 Office of Miners Health, Safety and Training shall cooperate with respect to each agency's  
62 programs and records to effect an orderly and harmonious administration of the provisions of this  
63 article. The secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection may avail himself or herself  
64 of any services which may be provided by other state agencies in this State and other states or  
65 by agencies of the federal government, and may reasonably compensate them for those services.  
66 Also, he or she may receive any federal funds, state funds or any other funds, and enter into  
67 cooperative agreements, for the reclamation of land affected by surface mining.

**§22-3-4. Reclamation; duties and functions of secretary.**

1 (a) The secretary shall administer the provisions of this article relating to surface-mining  
2 operations. The secretary has within his or her jurisdiction and supervision all lands and areas of  
3 the State, mined or susceptible of being mined, for the removal of coal and all other lands and

4 areas of the State deforested, burned over, barren or otherwise denuded, unproductive and  
5 subject to soil erosion and waste. Included within the lands and areas are lands seared and  
6 denuded by chemical operations and processes, abandoned coal mining areas, swamplands,  
7 lands and areas subject to flowage easements and backwaters from river locks and dams, and  
8 river, stream, lake and pond shore areas subject to soil erosion and waste. The jurisdiction and  
9 supervision exercised by the secretary shall be consistent with other provisions of this chapter.

10 (b) The secretary may:

11 (1) Propose rules for promulgation, in accordance with the provisions of article three,  
12 chapter twenty-nine-a of this code, to implement the provisions of this article: *Provided*, That the  
13 secretary shall give notice by publication of the public hearing required in article three, chapter  
14 twenty-nine-a of this code: *Provided, however*, That any forms, handbooks or similar materials  
15 having the effect of a rule as defined in article three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code were  
16 issued, developed or distributed by the director pursuant to or as a result of a rule are subject to  
17 the provisions of article three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code;

18 (2) Make investigations or inspections necessary to ensure complete compliance with the  
19 provisions of this code;

20 (3) Conduct hearings or appoint persons to conduct hearings under provisions of this  
21 article or rules adopted by the secretary; and for the purpose of any investigation or hearing under  
22 this article, the secretary or his or her designated representative, may administer oaths or  
23 affirmations, subpoena witnesses, compel their attendance, take evidence and require production  
24 of any books, papers, correspondence, memoranda, agreements or other documents or records  
25 relevant or material to the inquiry;

26 (4) Enforce the provisions of this article as provided in this article;

27 (5) Appoint such advisory committees as may be of assistance to the secretary in the  
28 development of programs and policies: *Provided*, That such advisory committees shall, in each  
29 instance, include members representative of the general public; and

30 (6) In relation to blasting on all surface-mining operations and all surface-blasting activities  
31 related to underground mining operations:

32 (A) Regulate blasting on all surface-mining operations;

33 (B) Implement and oversee the preblast survey process, as set forth in section thirteen-a,  
34 article three of this chapter;

35 (C) Maintain and operate a system to receive and address questions, concerns and  
36 complaints relating to mining operations;

37 (D) Set the qualifications for individuals and firms performing preblast surveys;

38 (E) Educate, train, examine and certify blasters; and

39 (F) Propose rules for legislative approval pursuant to the provisions of section fifteen,  
40 article three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code for the implementation of sections thirty-four  
41 through thirty-nine of this article.

42 (c)(1) After the secretary has adopted the rules required by this article, any person may  
43 petition the secretary to initiate a proceeding for the issuance, amendment or appeal of a rule  
44 under this article.

45 (2) The petition shall be filed with the secretary and shall set forth the facts which support  
46 the issuance, amendment or appeal of a rule under this article.

47 (3) The secretary may hold a public hearing or may conduct such investigation or  
48 proceeding as he or she considers appropriate in order to determine whether the petition should  
49 be granted or denied.

50 (4) Within ninety days after filing of a petition described in subdivision (1) of this  
51 subsection, the secretary shall either grant or deny the petition. If the secretary grants the petition,  
52 he or she shall promptly commence an appropriate proceeding in accordance with the provisions  
53 of chapter twenty-nine-a of this code. If the secretary denies the petition, he or she shall notify the  
54 petitioner in writing setting forth the reasons for the denial.

**§22-3-13. General environmental protection performance standards for surface mining; variances.**

1           (a) Any permit issued by the secretary pursuant to this article to conduct surface mining  
2 operations shall require that the surface mining operations meet all applicable performance  
3 standards of this article and other requirements set forth in legislative rules proposed by the  
4 secretary.

5           (b) The following general performance standards are applicable to all surface mines and  
6 require the operation, at a minimum, to:

7           (1) Maximize the utilization and conservation of the solid fuel resource being recovered to  
8 minimize re-affecting the land in the future through surface mining;

9           (2) Restore the land affected to a condition capable of supporting the uses which it was  
10 capable of supporting prior to any mining, or higher or better uses of which there is reasonable  
11 likelihood so long as the use or uses do not present any actual or probable hazard to public health  
12 or safety or pose any actual or probable threat of water diminution or pollution and the permit  
13 applicant's declared proposed land use following reclamation is not considered to be impractical  
14 or unreasonable, inconsistent with applicable land use policies and plans, involves unreasonable  
15 delay in implementation or is violative of federal, state or local law;

16           (3) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, with respect to all surface mines,  
17 backfill, compact where advisable to ensure stability or to prevent leaching of toxic materials and  
18 grade in order to restore the approximate original contour: *Provided*, That in surface mining which  
19 is carried out at the same location over a substantial period of time where the operation transects  
20 the coal deposit and the thickness of the coal deposits relative to the volume of the overburden is  
21 large and where the operator demonstrates that the overburden and other spoil and waste  
22 materials at a particular point in the permit area or otherwise available from the entire permit area  
23 is insufficient, giving due consideration to volumetric expansion, to restore the approximate  
24 original contour, the operator, at a minimum, shall backfill, grade and compact, where advisable,

25 using all available overburden and other spoil and waste materials to attain the lowest practicable  
26 grade, but not more than the angle of repose, to provide adequate drainage and to cover all acid-  
27 forming and other toxic materials in order to achieve an ecologically sound land use compatible  
28 with the surrounding region: *Provided, however,* That in surface mining where the volume of  
29 overburden is large relative to the thickness of the coal deposit and where the operator  
30 demonstrates that due to volumetric expansion the amount of overburden and other spoil and  
31 waste materials removed in the course of the mining operation is more than sufficient to restore  
32 the approximate original contour, the operator shall, after restoring the approximate contour,  
33 backfill, grade and compact, where advisable, the excess overburden and other spoil and waste  
34 materials to attain the lowest grade, but not more than the angle of repose, and to cover all acid-  
35 forming and other toxic materials in order to achieve an ecologically sound land use compatible  
36 with the surrounding region and the overburden or spoil shall be shaped and graded in a way as  
37 to prevent slides, erosion and water pollution and revegetated in accordance with the  
38 requirements of this article: *Provided further,* That the secretary shall propose rules for legislative  
39 approval in accordance with article three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code governing variances  
40 to the requirements for return to approximate original contour or highwall elimination and where  
41 adequate material is not available from surface mining operations permitted after the effective  
42 date of this article for: (A) Underground mining operations existing prior to August 3, 1977; or (B)  
43 for areas upon which surface mining prior to July 1, 1977, created highwalls;

44 (4) Stabilize and protect all surface areas, including spoil piles, affected by the surface  
45 mining operation to effectively control erosion and attendant air and water pollution;

46 (5) Remove the topsoil from the land in a separate layer, replace it on the backfill area or,  
47 if not utilized immediately, segregate it in a separate pile from other spoil and, when the topsoil is  
48 not replaced on a backfill area within a time short enough to avoid deterioration of the topsoil,  
49 maintain a successful vegetative cover by quick growing plants or by other similar means in order  
50 to protect topsoil from wind and water erosion and keep it free of any contamination by other acid

51 or toxic material: *Provided*, That if topsoil is of insufficient quantity or of poor quality for sustaining  
52 vegetation, or if other strata can be shown to be more suitable for vegetation requirements, then  
53 the operator shall remove, segregate and preserve in a like manner any other strata which is best  
54 able to support vegetation;

55 (6) Restore the topsoil or the best available subsoil which is best able to support  
56 vegetation;

57 (7) Ensure that all prime farmlands are mined and reclaimed in accordance with the  
58 specifications for soil removal, storage, replacement and reconstruction established by the United  
59 States Secretary of Agriculture and the Soil Conservation Service pertaining thereto. The  
60 operator, at a minimum, shall: (A) Segregate the A horizon of the natural soil, except where it can  
61 be shown that other available soil materials will create a final soil having a greater productive  
62 capacity and, if not utilized immediately, stockpile this material separately from other spoil and  
63 provide needed protection from wind and water erosion or contamination by other acid or toxic  
64 material; (B) segregate the B horizon of the natural soil, or underlying C horizons or other strata,  
65 or a combination of the horizons or other strata that are shown to be both texturally and chemically  
66 suitable for plant growth and that can be shown to be equally or more favorable for plant growth  
67 than the B horizon, in sufficient quantities to create in the regraded final soil a root zone of  
68 comparable depth and quality to that which existed in the natural soil and, if not utilized  
69 immediately, stockpile this material separately from other spoil and provide needed protection  
70 from wind and water erosion or contamination by other acid or toxic material; (C) replace and  
71 regrade the root zone material described in paragraph (B) of this subdivision with proper  
72 compaction and uniform depth over the regraded spoil material; and (D) redistribute and grade in  
73 a uniform manner the surface soil horizon described in paragraph (A) of this subdivision;

74 (8) Create, if authorized in the approved surface mining and reclamation plan and permit,  
75 permanent impoundments of water on mining sites as part of reclamation activities in accordance  
76 with rules promulgated by the secretary;

77           (9) Where augering is the method of recovery, seal all auger holes with an impervious and  
78 noncombustible material in order to prevent drainage except where the secretary determines that  
79 the resulting impoundment of water in the auger holes may create a hazard to the environment  
80 or the public welfare and safety: *Provided*, That the secretary may prohibit augering if necessary  
81 to maximize the utilization, recoverability or conservation of the mineral resources or to protect  
82 against adverse water quality impacts;

83           (10) Minimize the disturbances to the prevailing hydrologic balance at the mine site and in  
84 associated off-site areas and to the quality and quantity of water in surface and groundwater  
85 systems both during and after surface mining operations and during reclamation by: (A) Avoiding  
86 acid or other toxic mine drainage by such measures as, but not limited to: (i) Preventing or  
87 removing water from contact with toxic producing deposits; (ii) treating drainage to reduce toxic  
88 content which adversely affects downstream water upon being released to water courses; and  
89 (iii) casing, sealing or otherwise managing boreholes, shafts and wells and keep acid or other  
90 toxic drainage from entering ground and surface waters; (B) conducting surface mining operations  
91 so as to prevent to the extent possible, using the best technology currently available, additional  
92 contributions of suspended solids to streamflow or runoff outside the permit area, but in no event  
93 may contributions be in excess of requirements set by applicable state or federal law; (C)  
94 constructing an approved drainage system pursuant to paragraph (B) of this subdivision, prior to  
95 commencement of surface mining operations, the system to be certified by a person approved by  
96 the secretary to be constructed as designed and as approved in the reclamation plan; (D) avoiding  
97 channel deepening or enlargement in operations requiring the discharge of water from mines; (E)  
98 unless otherwise authorized by the secretary, cleaning out and removing temporary or large  
99 settling ponds or other siltation structures after disturbed areas are revegetated and stabilized,  
100 and depositing the silt and debris at a site and in a manner approved by the secretary; (F) restoring  
101 recharge capacity of the mined area to approximate premining conditions; and (G) any other  
102 actions prescribed by the secretary;



103           (11) With respect to surface disposal of mine wastes, tailings, coal processing wastes and  
104 other wastes in areas other than the mine working excavations: (A) Stabilize all waste piles in  
105 designated areas through construction in compacted layers, including the use of noncombustible  
106 and impervious materials if necessary, and assure the final contour of the waste pile will be  
107 compatible with natural surroundings and that the site will be stabilized and revegetated according  
108 to the provisions of this article; and (B) assure that the construction of any coal waste pile or other  
109 coal waste storage area utilizes appropriate technologies, such as capping or the use of liners, or  
110 any other demonstrated technologies or measures which are consistent with good engineering  
111 practices, to prevent an acid mine drainage discharge;

112           (12) Design, locate, construct, operate, maintain, enlarge, modify and remove or abandon,  
113 in accordance with standards and criteria developed pursuant to subsection (f) of this section, all  
114 existing and new coal mine waste piles consisting of mine wastes, tailings, coal processing wastes  
115 or other liquid and solid wastes and used either temporarily or permanently as dams or  
116 embankments;

117           (13) Refrain from surface mining within five hundred feet of any active and abandoned  
118 underground mines in order to prevent breakthroughs and to protect health or safety of miners:  
119 *Provided*, That the secretary shall permit an operator to mine near, through or partially through  
120 an abandoned underground mine or closer to an active underground mine if: (A) The nature,  
121 timing and sequencing of the approximate coincidence of specific surface mine activities with  
122 specific underground mine activities are coordinated jointly by the operators involved and  
123 approved by the secretary; and (B) the operations will result in improved resource recovery,  
124 abatement of water pollution or elimination of hazards to the health and safety of the public:  
125 *Provided, however*, That any breakthrough which does occur shall be sealed;

126           (14) Ensure that all debris, acid-forming materials, toxic materials or materials constituting  
127 a fire hazard are treated or buried and compacted, or otherwise disposed of in a manner designed  
128 to prevent contamination of ground or surface waters, and that contingency plans are developed

129 to prevent sustained combustion: *Provided*, That the operator shall remove or bury all metal,  
130 lumber, equipment and other debris resulting from the operation before grading release;

131 (15) Ensure that explosives are used only in accordance with existing state and federal  
132 law and the rules promulgated by the secretary, which shall include provisions to:

133 (A) Maintain for a period of at least three years and make available for public inspection,  
134 upon written request, a log detailing the location of the blasts, the pattern and depth of the drill  
135 holes, the amount of explosives used per hole and the order and length of delay in the blasts; and

136 (B) Require that all blasting operations be conducted by persons certified by the Division  
137 of Mining and Reclamation.

138 (16) Ensure that all reclamation efforts proceed in an environmentally sound manner and  
139 as contemporaneously as practicable with the surface mining operations. Time limits shall be  
140 established by the secretary requiring backfilling, grading and planting to be kept current:

141 *Provided*, That where surface mining operations and underground mining operations are  
142 proposed on the same area, which operations must be conducted under separate permits, the  
143 secretary may grant a variance from the requirement that reclamation efforts proceed as  
144 contemporaneously as practicable to permit underground mining operations prior to reclamation:

145 (A) If the secretary finds in writing that:

146 (i) The applicant has presented, as part of the permit application, specific, feasible plans  
147 for the proposed underground mining operations;

148 (ii) The proposed underground mining operations are necessary or desirable to assure  
149 maximum practical recovery of the mineral resource and will avoid multiple disturbance of the  
150 surface;

151 (iii) The applicant has satisfactorily demonstrated that the plan for the underground mining  
152 operations conforms to requirements for underground mining in the jurisdiction and that permits  
153 necessary for the underground mining operations have been issued by the appropriate authority;

154 (iv) The areas proposed for the variance have been shown by the applicant to be  
155 necessary for the implementing of the proposed underground mining operations;

156 (v) No substantial adverse environmental damage, either on-site or off-site, will result from  
157 the delay in completion of reclamation as required by this article; and

158 (vi) Provisions for the off-site storage of spoil will comply with subdivision (22), subsection  
159 (b) of this section;

160 (B) If the secretary has promulgated specific rules to govern the granting of the variances  
161 in accordance with the provisions of this subparagraph and has imposed any additional  
162 requirements as the secretary considers necessary;

163 (C) If variances granted under the provisions of this paragraph are reviewed by the  
164 secretary not more than three years from the date of issuance of the permit: *Provided*, That the  
165 underground mining permit shall terminate if the underground operations have not commenced  
166 within three years of the date the permit was issued, unless extended as set forth in subdivision  
167 (3), section eight of this article; and

168 (D) If liability under the bond filed by the applicant with the secretary pursuant to  
169 subsection (b), section eleven of this article is for the duration of the underground mining  
170 operations and until the requirements of subsection (g), section eleven of this article and section  
171 twenty-three of this article have been fully complied with;

172 (17) Ensure that the construction, maintenance and post-mining conditions of access and  
173 haul roads into and across the site of operations will control or prevent erosion and siltation,  
174 pollution of water, damage to fish or wildlife or their habitat, or public or private property: *Provided*,  
175 That access roads constructed for and used to provide infrequent service to surface facilities,  
176 such as ventilators or monitoring devices, are exempt from specific construction criteria provided  
177 adequate stabilization to control erosion is achieved through alternative measures;

178 (18) Refrain from the construction of roads or other access ways up a stream bed or  
179 drainage channel or in proximity to the channel so as to significantly alter the normal flow of water;

180 (19) Establish on the regraded areas, and all other lands affected, a diverse, effective and  
181 permanent vegetative cover of the same seasonal variety native to the area of land to be affected

182 or of a fruit, grape or berry producing variety suitable for human consumption and capable of self-  
183 regeneration and plant succession at least equal in extent of cover to the natural vegetation of  
184 the area, except that introduced species may be used in the revegetation process where desirable  
185 or when necessary to achieve the approved post-mining land use plan;

186 (20) Assume the responsibility for successful revegetation, as required by subdivision (19)  
187 of this subsection, for a period of not less than five growing seasons, as defined by the secretary,  
188 after the last year of augmented seeding, fertilizing, irrigation or other work in order to assure  
189 compliance with subdivision (19) of this subsection: *Provided*, That when the secretary issues a  
190 written finding approving a long-term agricultural post-mining land use as a part of the mining and  
191 reclamation plan, the director may grant exception to the provisions of subdivision (19) of this  
192 subsection: *Provided, however*, That when the director approves an agricultural post-mining land  
193 use, the applicable five growing seasons of responsibility for revegetation begins on the date of  
194 initial planting for the agricultural post-mining land use;

195 On lands eligible for remaining assume the responsibility for successful revegetation, as  
196 required by subdivision (19) of this subsection, for a period of not less than two growing seasons,  
197 as defined by the director after the last year of augmented seeding, fertilizing, irrigation or other  
198 work in order to assure compliance with subdivision (19) of this subsection;

199 (21) Protect off-site areas from slides or damage occurring during surface mining  
200 operations and not deposit spoil material or locate any part of the operations or waste  
201 accumulations outside the permit area: *Provided*, That spoil material may be placed outside the  
202 permit area if approved by the secretary after a finding that environmental benefits will result from  
203 the placing of spoil material outside the permit area;

204 (22) Place all excess spoil material resulting from surface mining activities in a manner  
205 that: (A) Spoil is transported and placed in a controlled manner in position for concurrent  
206 compaction and in a way as to assure mass stability and to prevent mass movement; (B) the  
207 areas of disposal are within the bonded permit areas and all organic matter is removed

208 immediately prior to spoil placements; (C) appropriate surface and internal drainage system or  
209 diversion ditches are used to prevent spoil erosion and movement; (D) the disposal area does not  
210 contain springs, natural water courses or wet weather seeps, unless lateral drains are constructed  
211 from the wet areas to the main under drains in a manner that filtration of the water into the spoil  
212 pile will be prevented; (E) if placed on a slope, the spoil is placed upon the most moderate slope  
213 among those upon which, in the judgment of the secretary, the spoil could be placed in compliance  
214 with all the requirements of this article, and is placed, where possible, upon, or above, a natural  
215 terrace, bench or berm, if placement provides additional stability and prevents mass movement;  
216 (F) where the toe of the spoil rests on a downslope, a rock toe buttress, of sufficient size to prevent  
217 mass movement, is constructed; (G) the final configuration is compatible with the natural drainage  
218 pattern and surroundings and suitable for intended uses; (H) the design of the spoil disposal area  
219 is certified by a qualified registered professional engineer in conformance with professional  
220 standards; and (I) all other provisions of this article are met: *Provided*, That where the excess  
221 spoil material consists of at least eighty percent, by volume, sandstone, limestone or other rocks  
222 that do not slake in water and will not degrade to soil material, the secretary may approve alternate  
223 methods for disposal of excess spoil material, including fill placement by dumping in a single lift,  
224 on a site-specific basis: *Provided, however*, That the services of a qualified registered professional  
225 engineer experienced in the design and construction of earth and rockfill embankment are utilized:  
226 *Provided further*, That the approval may not be unreasonably withheld if the site is suitable;

227 (23) Meet any other criteria necessary to achieve reclamation in accordance with the  
228 purposes of this article, taking into consideration the physical, climatological and other  
229 characteristics of the site;

230 (24) To the extent possible, using the best technology currently available, minimize  
231 disturbances and adverse impacts of the operation on fish, wildlife and related environmental  
232 values, and achieve enhancement of these resources where practicable; and

233           (25) Retain a natural barrier to inhibit slides and erosion on permit areas where outcrop  
234 barriers are required: *Provided*, That constructed barriers may be allowed where: (A) Natural  
235 barriers do not provide adequate stability; (B) natural barriers would result in potential future water  
236 quality deterioration; and (C) natural barriers would conflict with the goal of maximum utilization  
237 of the mineral resource: *Provided, however*, That at a minimum, the constructed barrier shall be  
238 of sufficient width and height to provide adequate stability and the stability factor shall equal or  
239 exceed that of the natural outcrop barrier: *Provided further*, That where water quality is  
240 paramount, the constructed barrier shall be composed of impervious material with controlled  
241 discharge points.

242           (c)(1) The secretary may prescribe procedures pursuant to which he or she may permit  
243 surface mining operations for the purposes set forth in subdivision (3) of this subsection.

244           (2) Where an applicant meets the requirements of subdivisions (3) and (4) of this  
245 subsection, a permit without regard to the requirement to restore to approximate original contour  
246 set forth in subsection (b) or (d) of this section may be granted for the surface mining of coal  
247 where the mining operation will remove an entire coal seam or seams running through the upper  
248 fraction of a mountain, ridge or hill, except as provided in paragraph (A), subdivision (4) of this  
249 subsection, by removing all of the overburden and creating a level plateau or a gently rolling  
250 contour with no highwalls remaining and capable of supporting post-mining uses in accordance  
251 with the requirements of this subsection.

252           (3) In cases where an industrial, commercial, agricultural, commercial forestry, residential  
253 or public facility including recreational uses is proposed for the post-mining use of the affected  
254 land, the secretary may grant a permit for a surface mining operation of the nature described in  
255 subdivision (2) of this subsection where: (A) The proposed post-mining land use is determined to  
256 constitute an equal or better use of the affected land, as compared with premining use; (B) the  
257 applicant presents specific plans for the proposed post-mining land use and appropriate  
258 assurances that the use will be: (i) Compatible with adjacent land uses; (ii) practicable with respect

259 to achieving the proposed use; (iii) obtainable according to data regarding expected need and  
260 market; (iv) supported by commitments from public agencies where appropriate; (v) practicable  
261 with respect to private financial capability for completion of the proposed use; (vi) planned  
262 pursuant to a schedule attached to the reclamation plan so as to integrate the mining operation  
263 and reclamation with the post-mining land use; and (vii) designed by a person approved by the  
264 secretary in conformance with standards established to assure the stability, drainage and  
265 configuration necessary for the intended use of the site; (C) the proposed use would be  
266 compatible with adjacent land uses, and existing state and local land use plans and programs;  
267 (D) the secretary provides the county commission of the county in which the land is located and  
268 any state or federal agency which the secretary, in his or her discretion, determines to have an  
269 interest in the proposed use, an opportunity of not more than sixty days to review and comment  
270 on the proposed use; and (E) all other requirements of this article will be met.

271 (4) In granting any permit pursuant to this subsection, the secretary shall require that: (A)  
272 A natural barrier be retained to inhibit slides and erosion on permit areas where outcrop barriers  
273 are required: *Provided*, That constructed barriers may be allowed where: (i) Natural barriers do  
274 not provide adequate stability; (ii) natural barriers would result in potential future water quality  
275 deterioration; and (iii) natural barriers would conflict with the goal of maximum utilization of the  
276 mineral resource: *Provided, however*, That, at a minimum, the constructed barrier shall be  
277 sufficient in width and height to provide adequate stability and the stability factor shall equal or  
278 exceed that of the natural outcrop barrier: *Provided further*, That where water quality is  
279 paramount, the constructed barrier shall be composed of impervious material with controlled  
280 discharge points; (B) the reclaimed area is stable; (C) the resulting plateau or rolling contour  
281 drains inward from the outslopes except at specific points; (D) no damage will be done to natural  
282 watercourses; (E) spoil will be placed on the mountaintop bench as is necessary to achieve the  
283 planned post-mining land use: *And provided further*, That all excess spoil material not retained on  
284 the mountaintop shall be placed in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (22), subsection

285 (b) of this section; and (F) ensure stability of the spoil retained on the mountaintop and meet the  
286 other requirements of this article.

287 (5) All permits granted under the provisions of this subsection shall be reviewed not more  
288 than three years from the date of issuance of the permit; unless the applicant affirmatively  
289 demonstrates that the proposed development is proceeding in accordance with the terms of the  
290 approved schedule and reclamation plan.

291 (d) In addition to those general performance standards required by this section, when  
292 surface mining occurs on slopes of twenty degrees or greater, or on lesser slopes as may be  
293 defined by rule after consideration of soil and climate, no debris, abandoned or disabled  
294 equipment, spoil material or waste mineral matter will be placed on the natural downslope below  
295 the initial bench or mining cut: *Provided*, That soil or spoil material from the initial cut of earth in a  
296 new surface mining operation may be placed on a limited specified area of the downslope below  
297 the initial cut if the permittee can establish to the satisfaction of the secretary that the soil or spoil  
298 will not slide and that the other requirements of this section can still be met.

299 (e) The secretary may propose rules for legislative approval in accordance with article  
300 three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code that permit variances from the approximate original  
301 contour requirements of this section: *Provided*, That the watershed control of the area is improved:  
302 *Provided, however*, That complete backfilling with spoil material is required to completely cover  
303 the highwall, which material will maintain stability following mining and reclamation.

304 (f) The secretary shall propose rules for legislative approval in accordance with article  
305 three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code for the design, location, construction, maintenance,  
306 operation, enlargement, modification, removal and abandonment of new and existing coal mine  
307 waste piles. In addition to engineering and other technical specifications, the standards and  
308 criteria developed pursuant to this subsection shall include provisions for review and approval of  
309 plans and specifications prior to construction, enlargement, modification, removal or  
310 abandonment; performance of periodic inspections during construction; issuance of certificates



311 of approval upon completion of construction; performance of periodic safety inspections; and  
312 issuance of notices and orders for required remedial or maintenance work or affirmative action:  
313 *Provided, That* whenever the secretary finds that any coal processing waste pile constitutes an  
314 imminent danger to human life, he or she may, in addition to all other remedies and without the  
315 necessity of obtaining the permission of any person prior or present who operated or operates a  
316 pile or the landowners involved, enter upon the premises where any coal processing waste pile  
317 exists and may take or order to be taken any remedial action that may be necessary or expedient  
318 to secure the coal processing waste pile and to abate the conditions which cause the danger to  
319 human life: *Provided, however, That* the cost reasonably incurred in any remedial action taken by  
320 the secretary under this subsection may be paid for initially by funds appropriated to the division  
321 for these purposes and the sums expended shall be recovered from any responsible operator or  
322 landowner, individually or jointly, by suit initiated by the Attorney General at the request of the  
323 secretary. For purposes of this subsection, operates or operated means to enter upon a coal  
324 processing waste pile, or part of a coal processing waste pile, for the purpose of disposing,  
325 depositing, dumping coal processing wastes on the pile or removing coal processing waste from  
326 the pile, or to employ a coal processing waste pile for retarding the flow of or for the impoundment  
327 of water.

328 (g) The secretary shall promulgate for review and consideration by the West Virginia  
329 Legislature during the 2017 Regular Session of the West Virginia Legislature revisions to the rules  
330 for minimizing the disturbances to the prevailing hydrologic balance at a mine site and in  
331 associated off-site areas both during and after surface mining operations and during reclamation  
332 as required under subdivision (10), subsection (b) of this section, including specifically the rules  
333 for stormwater runoff and control plans. The secretary shall specifically conform these rules to  
334 the federal standards codified at 30 C.F.R. §816.41 (1983) and 30 C.F.R. §816.45-47 (1983)  
335 when proposing revisions to the state rule. The secretary shall not propose rules more stringent

336 than the federal standards codified at 30 C.F.R. §816.41 (1983) and 30 C.F.R. §816.45-47 (1983)  
337 when proposing revisions to the state rule.

**§22-3-13a. Preblast survey requirements.**

1 (a) At least thirty days prior to commencing blasting, as defined in section twenty-two-a of  
2 this article, an operator or an operator's designee shall make the following notifications in writing  
3 to all owners and occupants of man-made dwellings or structures that the operator or operator's  
4 designee will perform preblast surveys in accordance with subsection (f) of this section:

5 (1) For surface mining operations that are less than two hundred acres in a single  
6 permitted area or less than three hundred acres of contiguous or nearly contiguous area of two  
7 or more permitted areas, the required notifications shall be to all owners and occupants of man-  
8 made dwellings or structures within five tenths of a mile of the permitted area or areas;

9 (2) For all other surface mining operations, the required notifications shall be to all owners  
10 and occupants of man-made dwellings or structures within five tenths of a mile of the permitted  
11 area or areas or seven tenths of a mile of the proposed blasting site, whichever is greater; and

12 (3) For permitted surface disturbance of underground mines, the required notifications  
13 shall be to all owners and occupants of man-made dwellings or structures within five tenths of a  
14 mile of the permitted surface area or areas.

15 (b) Any operator identified in subdivision (2), subsection (a) of this section that has already  
16 completed preblast surveys for man-made dwellings or structures within five tenths of a mile of  
17 the permit area and has commenced operations by the effective date of this section shall notify in  
18 writing all additional owners and occupants of man-made dwellings or structures within seven  
19 tenths of a mile of the proposed blasting site. Except for those dwellings or structures for which  
20 the operator secures a written waiver or executes an affidavit in accordance with the requirements  
21 of subsection (c) of this section, the operator or the operator's designee must perform the  
22 additional preblast surveys in accordance with subsection (f) of this section. (c) An occupant or  
23 owner of a man-made dwelling or structure within the areas described in subdivision (1) or (2),

24 subsection (a) of this section may waive the right to a preblast survey in writing. If a dwelling is  
25 occupied by a person other than the owner, both the owner and the occupant must waive the right  
26 to a preblast survey in writing. If an occupant or owner of a man-made dwelling or structure  
27 refuses to allow the operator or the operator's designee access to the dwelling or structure and  
28 refuses to waive in writing the right to a preblast survey or to the extent that access to any portion  
29 of the structure, underground water supply or well is impossible or impractical under the  
30 circumstances, the preblast survey shall indicate that access was refused, impossible or  
31 impractical. The operator or the operator's designee shall execute a sworn affidavit explaining the  
32 reasons and circumstances surrounding the refusals. The Division of Mining and Reclamation  
33 may not determine the preblast survey to be incomplete because it indicates that access to a  
34 particular structure, underground water supply or well was refused, impossible or impractical. The  
35 operator shall send copies of all written waivers and affidavits executed pursuant to this  
36 subsection to the Division of Mining and Reclamation.

37 (d) If a preblast survey was waived by the owner and was within the requisite area and  
38 the property was sold, the new owner may request a preblast survey from the operator.

39 (e) An owner within the requisite area may request, from the operator, a preblast survey  
40 on structures constructed after the original preblast survey.

41 (f) The preblast survey shall include:

42 (1) The names, addresses or description of structure location and telephone numbers of  
43 the owner and the residents of the structure being surveyed and the structure number from the  
44 permit blasting map;

45 (2) The current home insurer of the owner and the residents of the structure;

46 (3) The names, addresses and telephone numbers of the surface mining operator and the  
47 permit number;

48 (4) The current general liability insurer of the surface mining operator;

49           (5) The name, address and telephone number of the person or firm performing the preblast  
50 survey;

51           (6) The current general liability insurer of the person or firm performing the preblast survey;

52           (7) The date of the preblast survey and the date it was mailed or delivered to the Division  
53 of Mining and Reclamation.

54           (8) A general description of the structure and its appurtenances, including, but not limited  
55 to: (A) The number of stories; (B) the construction materials for the frame and the exterior and  
56 interior finish; (C) the type of construction including any unusual or substandard construction; and  
57 (D) the approximate age of the structure;

58           (9) A general description of the survey methods and the direction of progression of the  
59 survey, including a key to abbreviations used;

60           (10) Written documentation and drawings, videos or photographs of the preblast defects  
61 and other physical conditions of all structures, appurtenances and water sources which could be  
62 affected by blasting;

63           (11) Written documentation and drawings, videos or photographs of the exterior and  
64 interior of the structure to indicate preblast defects and condition;

65           (12) Written documentation and drawings, videos or photographs of the exterior and  
66 interior of any appurtenance of the structure to indicate preblast defects and condition;

67           (13) Sufficient exterior and interior photographs or videos, using a variety of angles, of the  
68 structure and its appurtenances to indicate preblast defects and the condition of the structure and  
69 appurtenances;

70           (14) Written documentation and drawings, videos or photographs of any unusual or  
71 substandard construction technique and materials used on the structure or its appurtenances or  
72 both structure and appurtenances;

73           (15) Written documentation relating to the type of water supply, including a description of  
74 the type of system and treatment being used, an analysis of untreated water supplies, a water

75 analysis of water supplies other than public utilities and information relating to the quantity and  
76 quality of water;

77 (16) When the water supply is a well, written documentation, where available, relating to  
78 the type of well; the well log; the depth, age and type of casing or lining; the static water level;  
79 flow data; the pump capacity; the drilling contractor; and the source or sources of the  
80 documentation;

81 (17) A description of any portion of the structure and appurtenances not documented or  
82 photographed and the reasons;

83 (18) The signature of the person performing the survey; and

84 (19) Any other information required by the secretary which additional information shall be  
85 established by rule in accordance with article three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code.

86 (g) Except for additional preblast surveys prepared within one hundred twenty days of the  
87 effective date of this section, pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, the preblast survey shall  
88 be submitted to the Division of Mining and Reclamation at least fifteen days prior to the  
89 commencement of any production blasting. The Division of Mining and Reclamation shall review  
90 each preblast survey as to form and completeness only and notify the operator of any deficiencies:  
91 *Provided*, That once all required surveys have been reviewed and accepted by the Division of  
92 Mining and Reclamation, blasting may commence sooner than fifteen days after submittal. The  
93 Division of Mining and Reclamation shall provide a copy of the preblast survey to the owner or  
94 occupant.

95 (h) The surface mining operator shall file notice of the preblast survey or the waiver in the  
96 office of the county clerk of the county commission of the county where the man-made dwelling  
97 or structure is located to notify the public that a preblast survey has been conducted or waived.  
98 The notice shall be on a form prescribed by the Division of Mining and Reclamation.

99 (i) The secretary shall propose rules for legislative approval in accordance with article  
100 three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code dealing with preblast survey requirements and setting  
101 the qualifications for individuals and firms performing preblast surveys.

102 (j) The provisions of this section do not apply to the extraction of minerals by underground  
103 mining methods.

**§22-3-22a. Blasting restrictions; site specific blasting design requirement.**

1 (a) For purposes of this section, the term “production blasting” means blasting that  
2 removes the overburden to expose underlying coal seams and does not include construction  
3 blasting.

4 (b) For purposes of this section, the term “construction blasting” means blasting to develop  
5 haul roads, mine access roads, coal preparation plants, drainage structures or underground coal  
6 mine sites and does not include production blasting.

7 (c) For purposes of this section, the term “protected structure” means any of the following  
8 structures that are situated outside the permit area: An occupied dwelling; a temporarily  
9 unoccupied dwelling which has been occupied within the past ninety days; a public building; a  
10 structure for commercial purposes; a school; a church; a community or institutional building; and  
11 a public park or a water well.

12 (d) Production blasting is prohibited within three hundred feet of a protected structure or  
13 within one hundred feet of a cemetery.

14 (e) Blasting within one thousand feet of a protected structure shall have a site-specific  
15 blast design approved by the Division of Mining and Reclamation. The site-specific blast design  
16 shall limit the type of explosives and detonating equipment, the size, the timing and frequency of  
17 blasts to do the following:

18 (1) Prevent injury to persons; (2) prevent damage to public and private property outside  
19 the permit area; (3) prevent adverse impacts on any underground mine; (4) prevent change in the  
20 course, channel or availability of ground or surface water outside the permit area; and (5) reduce  
21 dust outside the permit area.

22 In the development of a site-specific blasting plan, consideration shall be given, but is not  
23 limited to, the physical condition, type and quality of construction of the protected structure, the

24 current use of the protected structure and the concerns of the owner or occupant living in the  
25 protected structures identified in the blasting schedule notification area.

26 (f) An owner or occupant of a protected structure may waive the blasting prohibition within  
27 three hundred feet. If a protected structure is occupied by a person other than the owner, both  
28 the owner and the occupant of the protected structure shall waive the blasting prohibition within  
29 three hundred feet in writing. The operator shall send copies of all written waivers executed  
30 pursuant to this subsection to the Division of Mining and Reclamation. Written waivers executed  
31 and filed with the Division of Mining and Reclamation are valid during the life of the permit or any  
32 renewals of the permit and are enforceable against any subsequent owners or occupants of the  
33 protected structure.

34 (g) The provisions of this section do not apply to the following: (1) Underground coal mining  
35 operations; (2) the surface operations and surface impacts incident to an underground coal mine;  
36 and (3) the extraction of minerals by underground mining methods or the surface impacts of the  
37 underground mining methods: *Provided*, That nothing contained in this section may be construed  
38 to exempt any coal mining operation from the general performance standards as contained in  
39 section thirteen of this article and any rules promulgated pursuant to said section.

**§22-3-30a. Blasting requirements; liability and civil penalties in the event of property  
damage.**

1 (a) Blasting shall be conducted in accordance with the rules and laws established to  
2 regulate blasting.

3 (b) If the Department of Environmental Protection establishes after an inspection that a  
4 blast at a surface coal mine operation as defined by the provisions of subdivision (2), subsection  
5 (a), section thirteen-a of this article was not in compliance with the regulations governing blasting  
6 parameters and resulted in property damage to a protected structure, as defined in section twenty-  
7 two-a of this article, other than water wells, the following penalties shall be imposed for each  
8 permit area or contiguous permit areas where the blasting was out of compliance:

9           (1) For the first offense, the operator shall be assessed a penalty of not less than \$1,000  
10 nor more than \$5,000.

11           (2) For the second offense and each subsequent offense within one year of the first  
12 offense, the surface mining operator shall be assessed a penalty of not less than \$5,000 nor more  
13 than \$10,000.

14           (3) For the third offense and any subsequent offense within one year of the first offense,  
15 or for the failure to pay any assessment set forth within a reasonable time established by the  
16 secretary, the surface mining operator's permit is subject to an immediate issuance of a cessation  
17 order, as set out in section sixteen of this article. The cessation order shall only be released upon  
18 written order of the secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection when the following  
19 conditions have been met:

20           (A) A written plan has been established and filed with the secretary assuring that additional  
21 violations will not occur;

22           (B) The permittee has provided compensation for the property damages or the assurance  
23 of adequate compensation for the property damages that have occurred; and

24           (C) A permittee shall provide such monetary and other assurances as the secretary  
25 considers appropriate to compensate for future property damages. The monetary assurances  
26 required shall be in an amount at least equal to the amount of compensation required in paragraph  
27 (B), subdivision (3) of this subsection.

28           (4) In addition to the penalties described in subdivisions (1), (2) and (3) of this subsection  
29 for the second and subsequent offenses on any one permitted area regardless of the time period,  
30 the owner of the protected structure is entitled to a rebuttable presumption that the property  
31 damage is a result of the blast if: (A) A preblast survey was performed; and (B) the blasting site  
32 to which the second or subsequent offense relates is within seven tenths of a mile of the protected  
33 structure.



34 (5) No more than one offense may arise out of any one shot. For purposes of this section,  
35 “shot” means a single blasting event composed of one or multiple detonations of explosive  
36 material or the assembly of explosive materials for this purpose. One “shot” may be composed of  
37 numerous explosive charges detonated at intervals measured in milliseconds.

38 (c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (a) and (b) of this section, the  
39 Department of Environmental Protection may not impose penalties, as provided for in subsection  
40 (b) of this section, on an operator for the violation of any rule identified in subsection (b) of this  
41 section that is merely administrative in nature.

42 (d) The remedies provided in this section are not exclusive and may not bar an owner or  
43 occupant from any other remedy accorded by law.

44 (e) Where inspection by the Department of Environmental Protection establishes that  
45 production blasting, in violation of section twenty-two-a of this article, was done within three  
46 hundred feet of a protected structure, without an approved site-specific blast design or not in  
47 accordance with an approved site-specific blast design for production blasting within one  
48 thousand feet of any protected structure as defined in section twenty-two-a of this article or within  
49 one hundred feet of a cemetery, the monetary penalties and revocation, as set out in subsection  
50 (b) of this section, apply.

51 (f) All penalties and liabilities as set forth in subsection (b) of this section shall be assessed  
52 by the secretary, collected by the secretary and deposited with the Treasurer of the State of West  
53 Virginia in the General School Fund.

54 (g) The secretary shall propose rules for legislative approval pursuant to article three,  
55 chapter twenty-nine-a of this code for the implementation of this section.

56 (h) The provisions of this section do not apply to the extraction of minerals by underground  
57 mining methods: *Provided*, That nothing contained in this section may be construed to exempt  
58 any coal mining operation from the general performance standards as contained in section  
59 thirteen of this article and any rules promulgated pursuant thereto.

**§22-3-34. Office of explosives and blasting terminated; transfer of functions; responsibilities, personnel and assets.**

1           The office of explosives and blasting within the Department of Environmental Protection  
2 is hereby terminated, and its authority and functions are transferred to the Division of Mining and  
3 Reclamation. With this transfer, all records, assets, and contracts, along with the rights and  
4 obligations thereunder, obtained or signed on behalf of the office of explosives and blasting are  
5 hereby transferred and assigned to the Division of Mining and Reclamation. The secretary shall  
6 transfer from the office of explosives and blasting to the Division of Mining and Reclamation any  
7 personnel and assets presently used in the performance of the duties and functions required by  
8 sections thirty-four through thirty-seven of this article.

**§22-3-35. Legislative rules on surface-mining blasting; disciplinary procedures for certified blasters.**

1           (a) All authority to promulgate rules pursuant to article three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this  
2 code is hereby transferred from the office of explosives and blasting to the Division of Mining and  
3 Reclamation as of the effective date of enactment of this section and article during the 2016  
4 session of the Legislature: *Provided*, That any rule promulgated by the office of explosives and  
5 blasting shall remain in force and effect as though promulgated by the Division of Mining and  
6 Reclamation until the secretary amends the rules in accordance with the provisions of article  
7 three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code. Any rules promulgated by the secretary shall include,  
8 but not be limited to, the following:

9           (1) A procedure for the review, modification and approval, prior to the issuance of any  
10 permit, of any blasting plan required to be submitted with any application for a permit to be issued  
11 by the secretary pursuant to article three of this chapter, which sets forth procedures for the  
12 inspection and monitoring of blasting operations for compliance with blasting laws and rules, and  
13 for the review and modification of the blasting plan of any operator against whom an enforcement  
14 action is taken by the Department of Environmental Protection;

15           (2) Specific minimum requirements for preblast surveys, as set forth in section thirteen-a,  
16 article three of this chapter;

17           (3) A procedure for review of preblast surveys required to be submitted under section  
18 thirteen-a, article three of this chapter;

19           (4) A procedure for the use of seismographs for production blasting which shall be made  
20 part of the blasting log;

21           (5) A procedure to warn of impending blasting to the owners or occupants adjoining the  
22 blasting area;

23           (6) A procedure to limit the type of explosives and detonating equipment, the size, the  
24 timing and frequency of blasts based upon the physical conditions of the site so as to: (A) Prevent  
25 injury to persons; (B) prevent damage to public and private property outside the permit area; (C)  
26 prevent adverse impacts on any underground mine; (D) prevent change in the course, channel or  
27 availability of ground or surface water outside the permit area; and (E) reduce dust outside the  
28 permit area;

29           (7) Provisions for requiring mining operators to publish the planned blasting schedule in a  
30 newspaper of general circulation in the locality of the mining operation;

31           (8) Provisions for requiring mining operators to provide adequate advance written notice  
32 of the proposed blasting schedule to local governments, owners and occupants living within the  
33 distances prescribed in subsection (a), section thirteen-a, article three of this chapter;

34           (9) Provisions for establishing a process for the education, training, examination and  
35 certification of blasters working on surface-mining operations;

36           (10) Provisions for establishing disciplinary procedures for all certified blasters responsible  
37 for blasting on surface-mining operations conducted within this state in violation of any law or rule  
38 promulgated by the Department of Environmental Protection to regulate blasting; and

39           (11) Provisions for establishing a fee on each quantity of explosive material used for any  
40 purpose on surface mining operations, which fee shall be calculated to generate sufficient money

41 to provide for the operation of the explosives and blasting program and the Division of Energy.  
42 The secretary shall deposit all moneys received from these fees into a special revenue fund in  
43 the State Treasury known as the Mountaintop Removal Fund to be expended by the secretary  
44 and the Division of Energy in the performance of their duties.

**§22-3-36. Claims process for blasting.**

1 (a) The Division of Mining and Reclamation shall establish and manage a process for the  
2 filing, administration and resolution of claims related to blasting.

3 (b) Claims which may be filed and determined under the provisions of this section shall be  
4 those arising from both of the following:

5 (1) Damage to property arising from blasting activities conducted pursuant to a permit  
6 granted under article three of this chapter; and

7 (2) The damage is incurred by a claimant who is the owner or occupant of the property.

8 (c) The claims process established by the Division of Mining and Reclamation shall include  
9 the following:

10 (1) An initial determination by the Division of Mining and Reclamation of the merit of the  
11 claim; and

12 (2) An arbitration process whereby the claim can be determined and resolved by an  
13 arbitrator in a manner which is inexpensive, prompt and fair to all parties.

14 (d) If the operator disagrees with the initial determination made by the Division of Mining  
15 and Reclamation and requests arbitration, then the following shall apply:

16 (1) Any party may be represented by a representative of their choice;

17 (2) At the request of the claimant, the Division of Mining and Reclamation shall provide  
18 the claimant with representation in the arbitration process, which representation shall not  
19 necessarily be an attorney-at-law; and

20 (3) If the claim is upheld, in whole or in part, then the operator shall pay the costs of the  
21 proceeding, as well as reasonable representation fees and costs of the claimant, in an amount  
22 not to exceed \$1,000.

23 (e) Participation in the claims process created by this section shall be voluntary for the  
24 claimant. However, once the claimant has submitted a claim for determination under the  
25 provisions of this section, it is intended that the finding of the Division of Mining and Reclamation,  
26 if not taken to arbitration, shall be final. If arbitration is requested, it is intended that the results of  
27 such arbitration shall be final. The Division of Mining and Reclamation shall provide written  
28 notification to the claimant of the provisions of this subsection and shall secure a written  
29 acknowledgment from the claimant prior to processing a claim pursuant to the provisions of this  
30 section.

31 (f) The operator shall pay any claim for which the operator is adjudged liable within thirty  
32 days of a final determination. If the claim is not paid within thirty days, the secretary shall issue a  
33 cessation order pursuant to section sixteen, article three of this chapter for all sites operated by  
34 the operator.

35 (g) No permit to mine coal shall be granted unless the permit applicant agrees to be subject  
36 to the terms of this section.

37 (h) To fulfill its responsibilities pursuant to this section, the Division of Mining and  
38 Reclamation may retain the services of inspectors, experts and other persons or firms as may be  
39 necessary.

**§22-3-37. Rules, orders and permits to remain in effect regarding blasting; proceedings not  
affected.**

1 (a) All orders, determinations, rules, permits, grants, contracts, certificates, licenses,  
2 waivers, bonds, authorizations and privileges which have been issued, made, granted or allowed  
3 to become effective prior to the enactment of this article shall remain in effect according to their  
4 terms until modified, terminated, superseded, set aside or revoked pursuant to this article, by a  
5 court of competent jurisdiction, or by operation of law.

6 (b) Any proceedings, including notices of proposed rule-making, or any application for any  
7 license, permit or certificate pending before the division are not affected by this enactment.

**§22-3-38. Transfer of personnel and assets.**

1           The secretary shall transfer to the Division of Mining and Reclamation any personnel and  
2 assets presently used to perform or used in the performance of the duties and functions required  
3 by sections thirty-four through thirty-nine of this article.

**ARTICLE 11. WATER POLLUTION CONTROL ACT.**

**§22-11-6. Requirement to comply with standards of water quality and effluent limitations.**

1           All persons affected by rules establishing water quality standards and effluent limitations  
2 shall promptly comply with the rules: *Provided, That:*

3           (1) Where necessary and proper, the secretary may specify a reasonable time for persons  
4 not complying with the standards and limitations to comply with the rules and upon the expiration  
5 of that period of time, the secretary shall revoke or modify any permit previously issued which  
6 authorized the discharge of treated or untreated sewage, industrial wastes or other wastes into  
7 the waters of this state which result in reduction of the quality of the waters below the standards  
8 and limitations established therefor by rules of the board or secretary;

9           (2) For purposes of both this article and sections 309 and 505 of the federal Water  
10 Pollution Control Act, compliance with a permit issued pursuant to this article shall be considered  
11 compliance for purposes of both this article and sections 301, 302, 303, 306, 307 and 403 of the  
12 federal Water Pollution Control Act and with all applicable state and federal water quality  
13 standards, except for any standard imposed under section 307 of the federal Water Pollution  
14 Control Act for a toxic pollutant injurious to human health. Notwithstanding any provision of this  
15 code or rule or permit condition to the contrary, water quality standards themselves shall not be  
16 considered "effluent standards or limitations" for the purposes of both this article and sections 309  
17 and 505 of the federal Water Pollution Control Act and shall not be independently or directly  
18 enforced or implemented except through the development of terms and conditions of a permit  
19 issued pursuant to this article. Nothing in this section, however, prevents the secretary from  
20 modifying, reissuing or revoking a permit during its term. The provisions of this section addressing

21 compliance with a permit are intended to apply to all existing and future discharges and permits  
22 without the need for permit modifications; and

23 (3) The Legislature finds that there are concerns within West Virginia regarding the  
24 applicability of the research underlying the federal selenium criteria to a state such as West  
25 Virginia which has high precipitation rates and free-flowing streams and that the alleged  
26 environmental impacts that were documented in applicable federal research have not been  
27 observed in West Virginia and, further, that considerable research is required to determine if  
28 selenium is having an impact on West Virginia streams, to validate or determine the proper testing  
29 methods for selenium and to better understand the chemical reactions related to selenium  
30 mobilization in water.

31 (4) The Legislature finds that the EPA has been contemplating a revision to the federally  
32 recommended criteria for several years, but has yet to issue a revised standard.

33 (5) Because of the uncertainty regarding the applicability of the current selenium standard,  
34 the secretary is hereby directed to develop within six months of the effective date of this  
35 subdivision an implementation plan for the current selenium standard that will include, at  
36 minimum, the following:

37 (A) Implementing the criteria as a threshold standard;

38 (B) A monitoring plan that will include chemical speciation of any selenium discharge;

39 (C) A fish population survey and monitoring plan that will be implemented at a  
40 representative location to assess any possible impacts from selenium discharges if the threshold  
41 criteria are exceeded; and

42 (D) The results of the monitoring will be reported to the department for use in the  
43 development of state-specific selenium criteria.

44 (6) Within twenty-four months of the effective date of this subdivision, the secretary shall  
45 propose rules for legislative approval in accordance with the provisions of article three, chapter  
46 twenty-nine of this code which establish a state-specific selenium standard that protects aquatic

47 life. Concurrent with proposing a legislative rule, the secretary shall also submit the proposed  
48 standard and supporting documentation to the administrator of the Environmental Protection  
49 Agency. The secretary shall also consult with and consider research and data from the West  
50 Virginia Water Research Institute at West Virginia University, the regulated community and other  
51 appropriate groups in developing the state-specific selenium standard.

52 (7) Within thirty days of the effective date of this section, the secretary shall promulgate  
53 an emergency rule revising the statewide aluminum water quality criteria for the protection of  
54 aquatic life to incorporate aluminum criteria values using a hardness-based equation. Concurrent  
55 with issuing an emergency rule, the secretary shall also submit the proposed revisions and  
56 supporting documentation to the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency

57 (8) The secretary shall, within ninety days of receipt of any completed request for a site  
58 specific water quality criterion, approve or deny the request. Any denial or approval of an  
59 application shall detail the specific basis for the denial or approval and any revisions needed to  
60 the application. Any denial or approval of a request may be appealed to the environmental quality  
61 board pursuant to section twenty-one of this article.

## **CHAPTER 22A. MINERS' HEALTH, SAFETY AND TRAINING.**

### **ARTICLE 1. OFFICE OF MINERS' HEALTH, SAFETY AND TRAINING; ADMINISTRATION; ENFORCEMENT.**

#### **§22A-1-13. Employment of surface mine inspectors; eligibility; qualifications; examinations; salary; provisions relating to underground mine inspectors applicable to surface mine inspectors.**

1 (a) The office shall employ as many surface mine inspectors as the director determines to  
2 be reasonably necessary in fully and effectively carrying out the applicable provisions of this  
3 chapter.



4 (b) To be eligible for employment as a surface mine inspector the applicant shall be: (1)  
5 a citizen of West Virginia, in good health, not less than twenty-four years of age, of good character  
6 and reputation and of temperate habits; (2) a person who has had at least five years of practical  
7 experience in coal mines, at least two years of which have been on surface mines in this State:  
8 *Provided*, That graduation from any accredited college of mining engineering may be considered  
9 the equivalent of two years of practical experience; and (3) a person who has a good theoretical  
10 and practical knowledge of surface mines, surface mining methods, sound safety practices and  
11 applicable mining laws and rules. For the purpose of this section, practical experience means the  
12 performance of normal mining duties requiring a person to hold a certificate of competency and  
13 qualification as an experienced surface miner prior to actually performing the duties.

14 (c)(1) In order to qualify for appointment as a surface mine inspector, an eligible applicant  
15 shall submit to written, oral and practical examinations administered by the Mine Inspectors'  
16 Examining Board and furnish evidence of good health, character and other facts establishing  
17 eligibility as the board may require. The examinations shall relate to the duties to be performed  
18 by a surface mine inspector and, subject to the approval of the mine inspectors' examining board,  
19 may be prepared by the director.

20 (2) If the board finds after investigation and examination that an applicant is: (A) Eligible  
21 for appointment; and (B) has passed each required examination with a grade of at least seventy-  
22 five percent, or an overall combined average score of eighty percent, the board shall add the  
23 applicant's name and grades to the register of qualified eligible candidates and promptly certify  
24 its action in writing to the director. The director shall then appoint one of the candidates from the  
25 three having the highest grades.

26 (d) Surface mine inspectors shall be paid an annual salary of not less than \$37,332, which  
27 shall be fixed by the director, who shall take into consideration ability, performance of duty, and  
28 experience. Surface mine inspectors shall devote all of their time to the duties of the office.

29 (e) Except as expressly provided in this section to the contrary, all provisions of this article  
30 relating to the eligibility, qualification, appointment, tenure, and removal of underground mine  
31 inspectors, as well as those provisions relating to compensatory time and reimbursement for  
32 necessary expenses, are applicable to surface mine inspectors.

**§22A-1-14. Director and inspectors authorized to enter mines; duties of inspectors to  
examine mines; no advance notice of an inspection; reports after fatal  
accidents.**

1 (a) The director, or his or her authorized representative, has authority to visit, enter, and  
2 examine any mine, whether underground or on the surface, and may call for the assistance of  
3 any district mine inspector or inspectors whenever assistance is necessary in the examination of  
4 any mine. The operator of every coal mine shall furnish the director or his or her authorized  
5 representative proper facilities for entering the mine and making examination or obtaining  
6 information.

7 (b) If miners or one of their authorized representatives, have reason to believe, at any  
8 time, that dangerous conditions are existing or that the law is not being complied with, they may  
9 request the director to have an immediate investigation made: *Provided*, That miners are always  
10 encouraged to work with mine management with regards to safety concerns.

11 (c) Mine inspectors shall devote their full-time and undivided attention to the performance  
12 of their duties, and they shall examine all of the mines in their respective districts at least four  
13 times annually, and as often, in addition thereto, as the director may direct, or the necessities of  
14 the case or the condition of the mine or mines may require, with no advance notice of inspection  
15 provided to any person, and they shall make a personal examination of each working face and all  
16 entrances to abandoned parts of the mine where gas is known to liberate, for the purpose of  
17 determining whether an imminent danger, referred to in section fifteen of this article, exists in the  
18 mine, or whether any provision of article two of this chapter is being violated or has been violated  
19 within the past forty-eight hours in the mine. No other person shall, with the intent of undermining

20 the integrity of an unannounced mine inspection, provide advance notice of any inspection or of  
21 an inspector's presence at a mine to any person at that mine. Any person who, with the requisite  
22 intent, knowingly causes or conspires to provide advance notice of any inspection or of an  
23 inspector's presence at a mine is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not  
24 more than \$15,000 or imprisoned in a state correctional facility not less than one year and not  
25 more than five years, or both fined and imprisoned.

26 (d) In addition to the other duties imposed by this article and article two of this chapter, it  
27 is the duty of each inspector to note each violation he or she finds and issue a finding, order, or  
28 notice, as appropriate for each violation so noted. During the investigation of any accident, any  
29 violation may be noted whether or not the inspector actually observes the violation and whether  
30 or not the violation exists at the time the inspector notes the violation, so long as the inspector  
31 has clear and convincing evidence the violation has occurred or is occurring.

32 (e) An inspector shall require the operator or other employer to investigate all complaints  
33 received by the Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training involving a certified person's  
34 substance abuse or alcohol related impairment at a mine. Within thirty days following notification  
35 by the Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training to the operator or other employer of the  
36 complaint, the operator or other employer shall file with the Director a summary of its investigation  
37 into the alleged substance abuse or alcohol related impairment of a certified person.

38 (f) The mine inspector shall visit the scene of each fatal accident occurring in any mine  
39 within his or her district and shall make an examination into the particular facts of the accident;  
40 make a report to the director, setting forth the results of the examination, including the condition  
41 of the mine and the cause or causes of the fatal accident, if known, and all the reports shall be  
42 made available to the interested parties, upon written requests.

43 (g) At the commencement of any inspection of a coal mine by an authorized representative  
44 of the director, the authorized representative of the miners at the mine, as well as a salaried

45 employee of management, at the time of the inspection shall be given an opportunity to  
46 accompany the authorized representative of the director on the inspection.

**§22A-1-15. Findings, orders and notices.**

1 (a) If upon any inspection of a coal mine an authorized representative of the director finds  
2 that an imminent danger exists, the representative shall determine the area throughout which the  
3 danger exists and shall immediately issue an order requiring the operator of the mine or the  
4 operator's agent to cause immediately all persons, except those referred to in subdivisions (1),  
5 (2), (3) and (4), subsection (e) of this section, to be withdrawn from and to be prohibited from  
6 entering the area until an authorized representative of the director determines that the imminent  
7 danger no longer exists.

8 (b) If upon any inspection of a coal mine an authorized representative of the director finds  
9 that there has been a violation of the law, but the violation has not created an imminent danger,  
10 he or she shall issue a notice to the operator or the operator's agent fixing a reasonable time for  
11 the abatement of the violation. If upon the expiration of the period of time, as originally fixed or  
12 subsequently extended, an authorized representative of the director finds that the violation has  
13 not been totally abated, and if the director also finds that the period of time should not be further  
14 extended, the director shall find the extent of the area affected by the violation and shall promptly  
15 issue an order requiring the operator of the mine or the operator's agent to cause immediately all  
16 persons, except those referred to in subdivisions (1), (2), (3) and (4), subsection (e) of this section,  
17 to be withdrawn from and to be prohibited from entering the area until an authorized representative  
18 of the director determines that the violation has been abated.

19 (c) If upon any inspection of a coal mine an authorized representative of the director finds  
20 that an imminent danger exists in an area of the mine, in addition to issuing an order pursuant to  
21 subsection (a) of this section, the director shall review the compliance record of the mine.

22 (1) A review of the compliance record conducted in accordance with this subsection shall,  
23 at a minimum, include a review of the following:

24 (A) Any closure order issued pursuant to subsection (a) of this section;

25 (B) Any closure order issued pursuant to subsection (b) of this section;

26 (C) Any enforcement measures taken pursuant to this chapter, other than those authorized  
27 under subsections (a) and (b) of this section;

28 (D) Any evidence of the operator's lack of good faith in abating significant and substantial  
29 violations at the mine;

30 (E) Any accident, injury or illness record that demonstrates a serious safety or health  
31 management problem at the mine; and

32 (F) Any mitigating circumstances.

33 (2) If, after review of the mine's compliance record, the director determines that the mine  
34 has a history of repeated significant and substantial violations of a particular standard caused by  
35 unwarrantable failure to comply or a history of repeated significant and substantial violations of  
36 standards related to the same hazard caused by unwarrantable failure to comply and the history  
37 or histories demonstrate the operator's disregard for the health and safety of miners, the director  
38 shall issue a closure order for the entire mine or area throughout which the director determines  
39 the dangerous condition exists and shall immediately issue an order requiring the operator of the  
40 mine or the operator's agent to cause immediately all persons, except those referred to in  
41 subdivisions (1), (2), (3) and (4), subsection (e) of this section, to be withdrawn from and to be  
42 prohibited from entering the mine or area throughout which the director determines the dangerous  
43 condition until a thorough inspection of the mine or area has been conducted by the office and  
44 the director determines that the operator has abated all violations related to the imminent danger  
45 and any violations unearthed in the course of the inspection.

46 (d) All employees on the inside and outside of a mine who are idled as a result of the  
47 posting of a withdrawal order by a mine inspector shall be compensated by the operator at their  
48 regular rates of pay for the period they are idled, but not for more than the balance of the shift. If  
49 the order is not terminated prior to the next working shift, all the employees on that shift who are

50 idled by the order are entitled to full compensation by the operator at their regular rates of pay for  
51 the period they are idled, but for not more than four hours of the shift.

52 (e) The following persons are not required to be withdrawn from or prohibited from entering  
53 any area of the coal mine subject to an order issued under this section:

54 (1) Any person whose presence in the area is necessary, in the judgment of the operator  
55 or an authorized representative of the director, to eliminate the condition described in the order;

56 (2) Any public official whose official duties require him or her to enter the area;

57 (3) Any representative of the miners in the mine who is, in the judgment of the operator or  
58 an authorized representative of the director, qualified to make coal mine examinations or who is  
59 accompanied by such a person and whose presence in the area is necessary for the investigation  
60 of the conditions described in the order; and

61 (4) Any consultant to any of the persons set forth in this subsection.

62 (f) Notices and orders issued pursuant to this section shall contain a detailed description  
63 of the conditions or practices which cause and constitute an imminent danger or a violation of any  
64 mandatory health or safety standard and, where appropriate, a description of the area of the coal  
65 mine from which persons must be withdrawn and prohibited from entering.

66 (g) Each notice or order issued under this section shall be given promptly to the operator  
67 of the coal mine or the operator's agent by an authorized representative of the director issuing  
68 the notice or order and all the notices and orders shall be in writing and shall be signed by the  
69 representative and posted on the bulletin board at the mine.

70 (h) A notice or order issued pursuant to this section may be modified or terminated by an  
71 authorized representative of the director.

72 (i) Each finding, order and notice made under this section shall promptly be given to the  
73 operator of the mine to which it pertains by the person making the finding, order or notice.

74 (j) *Definitions.* — For the purposes of this section only, the following terms have the  
75 following meanings:

76 (1) "Unwarrantable failure" means aggravated conduct, constituting more than ordinary  
77 negligence, by a mine operator in relation to a violation of this chapter of the code; and

78 (2) "Significant and substantial violation" shall have the same meaning as that established  
79 in 6 FMSHRC 1 (1984).

**§22A-1-19. Judicial review.**

1 (a) Any order or decision issued by the director under this law, is subject to judicial review  
2 by the circuit court of the county in which the mine affected is located upon the filing in such court  
3 or with the judge thereof in vacation of a petition by any person aggrieved by the order or decision  
4 praying that the order or decision be modified or set aside, in whole or in part, except that the  
5 court shall not consider such petition unless such person has exhausted the administrative  
6 remedies available under this law and files within thirty days from date of such order or decision.

7 (b) The party making such appeal shall forthwith send a copy of such petition for appeal,  
8 by registered mail, to the other party. Upon receipt of such petition for appeal, the director shall  
9 promptly certify and file in such court a complete transcript of the record upon which the order or  
10 decision complained of was issued. The court shall hear such petition on the record made before  
11 the director. The findings of the director, if supported by substantial evidence on the record  
12 considered as a whole, shall be conclusive. The court may affirm, vacate or modify any order or  
13 decision or may remand the proceedings to the director for such further action as it may direct.

14 (c) In the case of a proceeding to review any order or decision issued by the director under  
15 this law, except an order or decision pertaining to an order issued under subsection (a), section  
16 fifteen of this article or an order or decision pertaining to a notice issued under subsection (b),  
17 section fifteen of this article, the court may, under such conditions as it may prescribe, grant such  
18 temporary relief as it deems appropriate pending final determination of the proceedings if:

19 (A) All parties to the proceeding have been notified and given an opportunity to be heard  
20 on a request for temporary relief;

21 (B) The person requesting such relief shows that there is a substantial likelihood that the  
22 person will prevail on the merits of the final determination of the proceeding; and

23 (C) Such relief will not adversely affect the health and safety of miners in the coal mine.

24 (d) The judgment of the court is subject to review only by the Supreme Court of Appeals  
25 of West Virginia upon a writ of certiorari filed in such court within sixty days from the entry of the  
26 order and decision of the circuit court upon such appeal from the director.

27 (e) The commencement of a proceeding under this section shall not, unless specifically  
28 ordered by the court, operate as a stay of the order or decision of the director.

29 (f) Subject to the direction and control of the attorney general, attorneys appointed for the  
30 director may appear for and represent the director in any proceeding instituted under this section.

**§22A-1-20. Injunctions.**

1 The director may institute a civil action for relief, including a permanent or temporary  
2 injunction, restraining order, or any other appropriate order in the circuit court of the county in  
3 which the mine is located whenever the operator or the operator's agent: (a) Violates or fails or  
4 refuses to comply with any order or decision issued under this law; or (b) interferes with, hinders  
5 or delays the director or his or her authorized representative in carrying out the provisions of this  
6 law; or (c) refuses to admit such representatives to the mine; or (d) refuses to permit the inspection  
7 of the mine, or the investigation of an accident or occupational disease occurring in, or connected  
8 with, such mine; or (e) refuses to furnish any information or report requested by the director in  
9 furtherance of the provisions of this law; or (f) refuses to permit access to, and copying of, such  
10 records as the director determines necessary in carrying out the provisions of this law. The court  
11 shall have jurisdiction to provide such relief as may be appropriate. Except as otherwise provided  
12 herein, any relief granted by the court to enforce an order under clause (a) of this section shall  
13 continue in effect until the completion or final termination of all proceedings for review of such  
14 order under this law, unless, prior thereto, the circuit court granting such relief sets it aside or  
15 modifies it. In any action instituted under this section to enforce an order or decision issued by



16 the director after a public hearing, the findings of the director, if supported by substantial evidence  
17 on the record considered as a whole, shall be conclusive.

**§22A-1-31. Withdrawal of certification.**

1 (a) *Charge of breach of duty.* — A mine inspector or the director may charge a mine  
2 foreman, assistant mine foreman, fire boss or any other certified person with neglect or failure to  
3 perform any duty mandated pursuant to this article or article two of this chapter. The charge shall  
4 state the name of the person charged, the duty or duties he or she is alleged to have violated, the  
5 approximate date and place so far as is known of the violation of duty, the capacity of the person  
6 making the charge, and shall be verified on the basis of information and belief or personal  
7 knowledge. The charge is initiated by filing it with the director or with the board of appeals. A copy  
8 of any charge filed with the board of appeals or any member thereof, shall be transmitted promptly  
9 to the director. The director shall maintain a file of each charge and of all related documents which  
10 shall be open to the public.

11 (b) *Evaluation of charge by board of appeals.* — Within twenty days after receipt of the  
12 charge the board shall evaluate the charge and determine whether or not a violation of duty has  
13 been stated. In making such a determination the board shall evaluate all documents submitted to  
14 it by all persons to determine as nearly as possible the substance of the charge and if the board  
15 of appeals is unable to determine the substance of the charge it may request the director to  
16 investigate the charge. Upon request, the director shall cause the charge to be investigated and  
17 report the results of the investigation to the board of appeals within ten days of the director's  
18 receipt of the charge. If the board determines that probable cause exists to support the allegation  
19 that the person charged has violated his or her duty, the board by the end of the twenty-day period  
20 shall set a date for hearing which date shall be within eighty days of the filing of the charge. Notice  
21 of the hearing or notice of denial of the hearing for failure to state a charge and a copy of the  
22 charge shall be mailed by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the charging party, the  
23 charged party, the director, the representative of the miner or miners affected and to any

24 interested person of record. Thereafter the board shall maintain the file of the charge which shall  
25 contain all documents, testimony and other matters filed which shall be open for public inspection.

26 (c) *Hearing.* — The board of appeals shall hold a hearing, may appoint a hearing examiner  
27 to take evidence and report to the board of appeals within the time allotted, may direct or authorize  
28 taking of oral depositions under oath by any participant, or adopt any other method for the  
29 gathering of sworn evidence which affords the charging party, the charged party, the director and  
30 any interested party of record due process of law and a fair opportunity to present and make a  
31 record of evidence. Any member of the board shall have the power to administer oaths. The board  
32 may subpoena witnesses and require production of any books, papers, records or other  
33 documents relevant or material to the inquiry. The board shall consider all evidence offered in  
34 support of the charge and on behalf of the persons so charged at the time and place designated  
35 in the notice. Each witness shall be sworn and a transcript shall be made of all evidence presented  
36 in any such hearing. No continuance shall be granted except for good cause shown.

37 The board of appeals may accept as evidence a notarized affidavit of drug testing  
38 procedures and results from a Medical Review Officer (MRO) in lieu of live testimony by the MRO.  
39 If the Board of Appeals desires testimony in lieu of a notarized affidavit, the MRO may testify  
40 under oath telephonically or by an Internet based program in lieu of physically attending the  
41 hearing.

42 At the conclusion of the hearing the board shall proceed to determine the case upon  
43 consideration of all the evidence offered and shall render a decision containing its findings of fact  
44 and conclusions of law. If the board finds by a preponderance of the evidence that the certificate  
45 or certificates of the charged person should be suspended or revoked, as hereinafter provided, it  
46 shall enter an order to that effect. No renewal of the certificate shall be granted except as herein  
47 provided.

48 (d) *Failure to cooperate.* — Any person charged who without just cause refuses or fails to  
49 appear before the board or cooperate in the investigation or gathering of evidence shall forfeit his

50 or her certificate or certificates for a period to be determined by the board, not to exceed five  
51 years, and such certificate or certificates may not be renewed except upon a successful  
52 completion of the examination prescribed by the law for mine foremen, assistant mine foremen,  
53 fire bosses or other certified persons.

54 (e) *Penalties.* — The board may suspend or revoke the certificate or certificates of a  
55 charged party for a minimum of thirty days or more including an indefinite period or may revoke  
56 permanently the certificate or certificates of the charged party, as it sees fit, subject to the  
57 prescribed penalties and monetary fines imposed elsewhere in this chapter.

58 (f) *Integrity of penalties imposed.* — No person whose certification is suspended or  
59 revoked under this provision can perform any duties under any other certification issued under  
60 this chapter, during the period of the suspension imposed herein.

61 (g) Any party adversely affected by a final order or decision issued by the board hereunder  
62 is entitled to judicial review thereof pursuant to section four, article five, chapter twenty-nine-a of  
63 this code.

**§22A-1-35. Mine rescue teams.**

1 (a) The operator shall provide mine rescue coverage at each active underground mine.

2 (b) Mine rescue coverage may be provided by:

3 (1) Establishing at least two mine rescue teams which are available at all times when  
4 miners are underground; or

5 (2) Entering into an arrangement for mine rescue services which assures that at least two  
6 mine rescue teams are available at all times when miners are underground.

7 (3) A West Virginia Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training Mine Rescue Team may  
8 serve as a second or backup team for mines within the state and qualify as one of the two teams  
9 required under subdivision (1) of this subsection and in accordance with 30 CFR, Part 49.20(4).  
10 The operator shall contact the office and obtain the state's agreement to serve as a backup team

11 in the form of a written notification signed by the director and this notification shall be kept posted  
12 at the mine.

13 (c) As used in this section, mine rescue teams shall be considered available where teams  
14 are capable of presenting themselves at the mine site(s) within a reasonable time after notification  
15 of an occurrence which might require their services. Rescue team members will be considered  
16 available even though performing regular work duties or while in an off-duty capacity. The  
17 requirement that mine rescue teams be available does not apply when teams are participating in  
18 mine rescue contests or providing rescue services to another mine.

19 (d) In the event of a fire, explosion or recovery operations in or about any mine, the director  
20 is hereby authorized to assign any mine rescue team to said mine to protect and preserve life and  
21 property. The director may also assign mine rescue and recovery work to inspectors, instructors  
22 or other qualified employees of the office as he or she deems necessary.

23 (e) The ground travel time between any mine rescue station and any mine served by that  
24 station shall not exceed two hours. To ensure adequate rescue coverage for all underground  
25 mines, no mine rescue station may provide coverage for more than seventy mines within the two-  
26 hour ground travel limit as defined in this subsection.

27 (f) Each mine rescue team shall consist of five members and one alternate, who are fully  
28 qualified, trained and equipped for providing emergency mine rescue service. Each mine rescue  
29 team shall be trained by a state certified mine rescue instructor.

30 (g) Each member of a mine rescue team must have been employed in an underground  
31 mine for a minimum of one year. For the purpose of mine rescue work only, miners who are  
32 employed on the surface but work regularly underground meet the experience requirement. The  
33 underground experience requirement is waived for those members of a mine rescue team on the  
34 effective date of this statute.

35 (h) An applicant for initial mine rescue training shall pass, on at least an annual basis, a  
36 physical examination by a licensed physician certifying his or her fitness to perform mine rescue

37 work. A record that such examination was taken, together with pertinent data relating thereto,  
38 shall be kept on file by the operator and a copy shall be furnished to the director.

39 (i) Upon completion of the initial training, all mine rescue team members shall receive at  
40 least forty hours of refresher training annually. This training shall be given at least four hours each  
41 month, or for a period of eight hours every two months, and shall include:

42 (1) Sessions underground at least once every six months;

43 (2) The wearing and use of a breathing apparatus by team members for a period of at  
44 least two hours, while under oxygen, once every two months;

45 (3) Where applicable, the use, care, capabilities and limitations of auxiliary mine rescue  
46 equipment, or a different breathing apparatus;

47 (4) Mine map training and ventilation procedures.

48 (j) When engaged in rescue work required by an explosion, fire or other emergency at a  
49 mine, all members of mine rescue teams assigned to rescue operations shall, during the period  
50 of their rescue work, be employees of the operator of the mine where the emergency exists, and  
51 shall be compensated by the operator at the rate established in the area for such work. In no case  
52 shall this rate be less than the prevailing wage rate in the industry for the most skilled class of  
53 inside mine labor. During the period of their emergency employment, members of mine rescue  
54 teams shall be protected by the workers' compensation subscription of the mine operator.

55 (k) During the recovery work and prior to entering any mine at the start of each shift, all  
56 rescue or recovery teams shall be properly informed of existing conditions and work to be  
57 performed by the designated company official in charge.

58 (1) For every two teams performing rescue or recovery work underground, one six-  
59 member team shall be stationed at the mine portal.

60 (2) Each rescue or recovery team performing work with a breathing apparatus shall be  
61 provided with a backup team of equal number, stationed at each fresh air base.

62           (3) The mine operator shall provide two-way communication and a lifeline or its equivalent  
63 at each fresh air base for all mine rescue or recovery teams and no mine rescue team member  
64 shall advance more than one thousand feet in by the fresh air base: *Provided*, That if a life may  
65 possibly be saved and existing conditions do not create an unreasonable hazard to mine rescue  
66 team members, the rescue team may advance a distance agreed upon by those persons directing  
67 the mine rescue or recovery operations: *Provided, however*, That the mine operator shall provide  
68 a lifeline or its equivalent in each fresh air base for all mine rescue or recovery teams.

69           (4) A rescue or recovery team shall immediately return to the fresh air base when the  
70 atmospheric pressure of any member's breathing apparatus depletes to sixty atmospheres, or its  
71 equivalent.

72           (l) Mine rescue stations shall provide a centralized storage location for rescue equipment.  
73 This storage location may be either at the mine site, affiliated mines or a separate mine rescue  
74 structure. All mine rescue teams shall be guided by the mine rescue apparatus and auxiliary  
75 equipment manual. Each mine rescue station shall be provided with at least the following  
76 equipment:

77           (1) Twelve self-contained oxygen breathing apparatuses, each with a minimum of two  
78 hours capacity, and any necessary equipment for testing such breathing apparatuses;

79           (2) A portable supply of liquid air, liquid oxygen, pressurized oxygen, oxygen generating  
80 or carbon dioxide absorbent chemicals, as applicable to the supplied breathing apparatuses and  
81 sufficient to sustain each team for six hours while using the breathing apparatuses during rescue  
82 operations;

83           (3) One extra, fully charged, oxygen bottle for each self-contained compressed oxygen  
84 breathing apparatus, as required under subdivision (1) of this subsection;

85           (4) One oxygen pump or a cascading system, compatible with the supplied breathing  
86 apparatuses;

87           (5) Twelve permissible cap lamps and a charging rack;

88           (6) Two gas detectors appropriate for each type of gas which may be encountered at the  
89 mines served;

90           (7) Two oxygen indicators;

91           (8) One portable mine rescue communication system or a sound-powered communication  
92 system. The wires or cable to the communication system shall be of sufficient tensile strength to  
93 be used as a manual communication system. The communication system shall be at least one  
94 thousand feet in length; and

95           (9) Necessary spare parts and tools for repairing the breathing apparatuses and  
96 communication system, as presently prescribed by the manufacturer.

97           (m) Mine rescue apparatuses and equipment shall be maintained in a manner that will  
98 ensure readiness for immediate use. A person trained in the use and care of breathing  
99 apparatuses shall inspect and test the apparatuses at intervals not exceeding thirty days and shall  
100 certify by signature and date that the inspections and tests were done. When the inspection  
101 indicates that a corrective action is necessary, the corrective action shall be made and recorded  
102 by said person. The certification and corrective action records shall be maintained at the mine  
103 rescue station for a period of one year and made available on request to an authorized  
104 representative of the director.

105           (n) Authorized representatives of the director have the right of entry to inspect any  
106 designated mine rescue station.

107           (o) When an authorized representative finds a violation of any of the mine rescue  
108 requirements, the representative shall take appropriate corrective action in accordance with  
109 section fifteen of this article.

110           (p) Operators affiliated with a station issued an order by an authorized representative will  
111 be notified of that order and that their mine rescue program is invalid. The operators shall have  
112 twenty-four hours to submit to the director a revised mine rescue program.

113 (q) Every operator of an underground mine shall develop and adopt a mine rescue  
114 program for submission to the director within thirty days of the effective date of this statute:  
115 *Provided, That a new program need only be submitted when conditions exist as defined in*  
116 *subsection (p) of this section, or when information contained within the program has changed.*

117 (r) A copy of the mine rescue program shall be posted at the mine and kept on file at the  
118 operator's mine rescue station or rescue station affiliate and the state regional office where the  
119 mine is located. A copy of the mine emergency notification plan filed pursuant to 30 CFR §49.9(a)  
120 will satisfy the requirements of subsection (q) of this section if submitted to the director.

121 (s) The operator shall immediately notify the director of any changed conditions materially  
122 affecting the information submitted in the mine rescue program.

**ARTICLE 1A. OFFICE OF MINERS' HEALTH, SAFETY AND TRAINING;  
ADMINISTRATION; SUBSTANCE ABUSE.**

**§22A-1A-2. Board of Appeals hearing procedures.**

1 (a) Any hearing conducted after the temporary suspension of a certified person's  
2 certificate pursuant to this article, shall be conducted within sixty days of the temporary  
3 suspension. The Board of Appeals shall make every effort to hold the hearing within forty days of  
4 the temporary suspension.

5 (b) All hearings of the Board of Appeals pursuant to this section shall be conducted in  
6 accordance with the provisions of subsection (c), section thirty-one, article one of this chapter. In  
7 addition to the rules and procedures in section thirty-one, article one of this chapter in hearings  
8 under this section, the Board of Appeals may accept as evidence a notarized affidavit of drug  
9 testing procedures and results from a Medical Review Officer (MRO) in lieu of live testimony by  
10 the MRO. If the Board of Appeals desires testimony in lieu of a notarized affidavit, the MRO may  
11 testify under oath telephonically or by an Internet based program in lieu of physically attending  
12 the hearing. The Board of Appeals may suspend the certificate or certificates of a certified person



13 for violation of this article or for any other violation of this chapter pertaining to substance abuse.  
14 The Board of Appeals may impose further disciplinary actions for repeat violations. The director  
15 shall have the authority to propose legislative rules for promulgation in accordance with article  
16 three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code to establish the disciplinary actions referenced in this  
17 section following the receipt of recommendations from the Board of Coal Mine Health and Safety  
18 following completion of the study required pursuant to section fourteen, article six of this chapter.  
19 The legislative rules authorized by this subsection shall not, however, include any provisions  
20 requiring an employer to take or refrain from taking any specific personnel action or mandating  
21 any employer to establish or maintain an employer-funded substance abuse rehabilitation  
22 program.

23 (c) No person whose certification is suspended or revoked under this section may perform  
24 any duties under any other certification issued under this chapter, during the period of the  
25 suspension imposed by the Board of Appeals.

26 (d) Any party adversely affected by a final order or decision issued by the Board of Appeals  
27 hereunder is entitled to judicial review thereof pursuant to section four, article five, chapter twenty-  
28 nine-a of this code.

## **ARTICLE 2. UNDERGROUND MINES.**

### **§22A-2-3. Fans.**

1 (a) The ventilation of mines, the systems for which extend for more than two hundred feet  
2 underground and which are opened after the effective date of this article, shall be produced by a  
3 mechanically operated fan or mechanically operated fans. Ventilation by means of a furnace is  
4 prohibited in any mine. The fan or fans shall be kept in continuous operation, unless written  
5 permission to do otherwise be granted by the director. In case of interruption to a ventilating fan  
6 or its machinery whereby the ventilation of the mine is interrupted, immediate action shall be taken  
7 by the mine operator or the operator's management personnel, in all mines, to cut off the power  
8 and withdraw the men from the face regions or other areas of the mine affected. If ventilation is

9 restored in fifteen minutes, the face regions and other places in the affected areas where gas  
10 (methane) is likely to accumulate, shall be reexamined by a certified person; and if found free of  
11 explosive gas, power may be restored and work resumed. If ventilation is not restored in fifteen  
12 minutes, all underground employees shall be removed from the mine, all power shall be cut off in  
13 a timely manner, and the underground employees shall not return until ventilation is restored and  
14 the mine examined by certified persons, mine examiners or other persons holding a certificate to  
15 make preshift examination. If ventilation is restored to the mine before miners reach the surface,  
16 the miners may return to underground working areas only after an examination of the areas is  
17 made by a certified person and the areas are determined to be safe.

18 (b) All main fans installed after the effective date of this article shall be located on the  
19 surface in fireproof housings offset not less than fifteen feet from the nearest side of the mine  
20 opening, equipped with fireproof air ducts, provided with explosion doors or a weak wall, and  
21 operated from an independent power circuit. In lieu of the requirements for the location of fans  
22 and pressure-relief facilities, a fan may be directly in front of, or over a mine opening: *Provided,*  
23 That such opening is not in direct line with possible forces coming out of the mine if an explosion  
24 occurs: *Provided, however,* That there is another opening having a weak wall stopping or  
25 explosion doors that would be in direct line with forces coming out of the mine. All main fans shall  
26 be provided with pressure-recording gauges or water gauges. A daily inspection shall be made of  
27 all main fans and machinery connected therewith by a certified electrician and a record kept of  
28 the same in a book prescribed for this purpose or by adequate facilities provided to permanently  
29 record the performance of the main fans and to give warning of an interruption to a fan.

30 (c) Auxiliary fans and tubing shall be permitted to be used in lieu of or in conjunction with  
31 line brattice to provide adequate ventilation to the working faces: *Provided,* That auxiliary fans be  
32 so located and operated to avoid recirculation of air at any time. Auxiliary fans shall be approved  
33 and maintained as permissible.

34 (d) If the auxiliary fan is stopped or fails, the electrical equipment in the place shall be  
35 stopped and the power disconnected at the power source until ventilation in the working place is  
36 restored. During such stoppage, the ventilation shall be by means of the primary air current  
37 conducted into the place in a manner to prevent accumulation of methane.

38 (e) In places where auxiliary fans and tubing are used, the ventilation between shifts,  
39 weekends and idle shifts shall be provided to face areas with line brattice or the equivalent to  
40 prevent accumulation of methane.

41 (f) The director may require that when continuous mine equipment is being used, all face  
42 ventilating systems using auxiliary fans and tubing shall be provided with machine-mounted  
43 diffuser fans, and such fans shall be continuously operated during mining operations.

44 (g) In the event of a fire or explosion in any coal mine, the ventilating fan or fans shall not  
45 intentionally be started, stopped, speed increased or decreased or the direction of the air current  
46 changed without the approval of the general mine foreman, and, if he or she is not immediately  
47 available, a representative of the Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training. A duly authorized  
48 representative of the employees should be consulted if practical under the circumstances.

**§22A-2-8. Duties; ventilation; loose coal, slate or rocks; props; drainage of water; man  
doors; instruction of apprentice miners.**

1 (a) The duties of the mine foreman shall be to keep a careful watch over the ventilating  
2 apparatus, the airways, traveling ways, pumps and drainage. He or she shall see that, as the  
3 miners advance their excavations, proper breakthroughs are made so as to ventilate properly the  
4 mine; that all loose coal, slate and rock overhead in the working places and along the haulways  
5 are removed or carefully secured so as to prevent danger to persons employed in such mines,  
6 and that sufficient suitable props, caps, timbers, roof bolts or other approved methods of roof  
7 supports are furnished for the places where they are to be used and delivered at suitable points.  
8 The mine foreman shall have all water drained or hauled out of the working places where  
9 practicable, before the miners enter, and such working places shall be kept dry as far as

10 practicable while the miners are at work. It shall be the duty of the mine foreman to see that proper  
11 crosscuts are made, and that the ventilation is conducted by means of such crosscuts through  
12 the rooms by means of checks or doors placed on the entries or other suitable places, and he or  
13 she shall not permit any room to be opened in advance of the ventilation current. The mine  
14 foreman, or other certified persons designated by him or her, shall measure the air current with  
15 an anemometer or other approved device at least weekly at the inlet and outlet at or near the  
16 faces of the advanced headings, and shall keep a record of such measurements in a book or  
17 upon a form prescribed by the director. Signs directing the way to outlets or escapeways shall be  
18 conspicuously placed throughout the mine.

19 (b) After July 1, 1971, hinged man doors, at least thirty inches square or the height of the  
20 coal seam, shall be installed between the intake and return at intervals of three hundred feet when  
21 the height of the coal is below forty-eight inches and at intervals of six hundred feet when the  
22 height of the coal is above forty-eight inches.

23 (c) The duties of the mine foreman and assistant mine foreman shall include the instruction  
24 of apprentice miners in the hazards incident to any new work assignments; to assure that any  
25 individual given a work assignment in the working face without prior experience on the face is  
26 instructed in the hazards incident thereto and supervised by a miner with experience in the tasks  
27 to be performed.

**§22A-2-14. Safety inspections; removal of gases.**

1 It shall be the duty of the mine foreman, assistant mine foreman or fire boss to examine  
2 all working places under his or her supervision for hazards at least once every two hours during  
3 each coal-producing shift, or more often if necessary for safety. In all mines such examinations  
4 shall include tests with an approved detector for methane and oxygen deficiency. It shall also be  
5 his or her duty to remove as soon as possible after its discovery any accumulations of explosive  
6 or noxious gases in active workings, and where practicable, any accumulations of explosive or  
7 noxious gases in the worked out and abandoned portions of the mine. It shall be the duty of the

8 mine foreman, assistant mine foreman or fire boss to examine each mine within three hours prior  
9 to the beginning of a shift and before any miner in such shift enters the active workings of the  
10 mine.

**§22A-2-20. Preparation of danger signal by fire boss or certified person acting as such  
prior to examination; report; records open for inspection.**

1 (a) It is the duty of the fire boss, or a certified person acting as such, to prepare a danger  
2 signal (a separate signal for each shift) with red color at the mine entrance at the beginning of his  
3 or her shift or prior to his or her entering the mine to make his or her examination and, except for  
4 those persons already on assigned duty, no person except the mine owner, operator or agent,  
5 and only then in the case of necessity, shall pass beyond this danger signal until the mine has  
6 been examined by the fire boss or other certified person and the mine or certain parts thereof  
7 reported by him or her to be safe. When reported by him or her to be safe, the danger sign or  
8 color thereof shall be changed to indicate that the mine is safe in order that employees going on  
9 shift may begin work. Each person designated to make the fire boss examinations shall be  
10 assigned a definite underground area of the mine, and, in making his or her examination shall  
11 examine all active working places in the assigned area and make tests with an approved device  
12 for accumulations of methane and oxygen deficiency; examine seals and doors; examine and test  
13 the roof, face and ribs in the working places and on active roadways and travelways, approaches  
14 to abandoned workings, accessible falls in active sections and areas where any person is  
15 scheduled to work or travel underground. He or she shall place his or her initials and the date at  
16 or near the face of each place he or she examines. Should he or she find a condition which he or  
17 she considers dangerous to persons entering the areas, he or she shall place a conspicuous  
18 danger sign at all entrances to the place or places. Only persons authorized by the mine  
19 management may enter the places while the sign is posted and only for the purpose of eliminating  
20 the dangerous condition. Upon completing his or her examination he or she shall report by suitable  
21 communication system or in person the results of this examination to a certified person trained as

22 a certified miner with at least two years mining experience designated by mine management to  
23 receive and record the report, at a designated station on the surface of the premises of the mine  
24 or underground, before other persons enter the mine to work in coal-producing shifts. He or she  
25 shall also record the results of his or her examination with ink or indelible pencil in a book  
26 prescribed by the director, kept for the purpose at a place on the surface of the mine designated  
27 by mine management. All records of daily and weekly reports, as prescribed herein, shall be open  
28 for inspection by interested persons.

29 (b) *Supplemental examination.* - When it becomes necessary to have workers enter areas  
30 of the mine not covered during the preshift examination, a supplemental examination shall be  
31 performed by a fire boss or certified person acting as such within three hours before any person  
32 enters the area. The fire boss or certified person acting as such shall examine the area for  
33 hazardous conditions, determine if air is traveling in its proper direction and test for oxygen  
34 deficiency and methane.

35 (c) Each examined area shall be certified by date, time and the initials of the examiner.

36 (d) The results of the examination shall be recorded with ink or indelible pencil by the  
37 examiner in the book referenced in subsection (a) of this section before he or she leaves the mine  
38 on that shift.

## ROOF-FACE-RIBS

### **§22A-2-25. Roof control programs and plans; refusal to work under unsupported roof.**

1 (a) Each operator shall undertake to carry out on a continuing basis a program to improve  
2 the roof control system of each coal mine and the means and measures to accomplish such  
3 system. The roof and ribs of all active underground roadways, travelways and working places  
4 shall be supported or otherwise controlled adequately to protect persons from falls of the roof or  
5 ribs. A roof control plan and revisions thereof suitable to the roof conditions and mining systems  
6 of each coal mine and approved by the director shall be adopted and set out in printed form before  
7 new operations. The safety committee of the miners of each mine where such committee exists

8 shall be afforded the opportunity to review and submit comments and recommendations to the  
9 director and operator concerning the development, modification or revision of such roof control  
10 plans. The plan shall show the type of support and spacing approved by the director. Such plan  
11 shall be reviewed periodically, at least every six months by the director, taking into consideration  
12 any falls of roof or rib or inadequacy of support of roof or ribs. A copy of the plan shall be furnished  
13 to the director or his or her authorized representative and shall be available to the miners and  
14 their representatives.

15 (b) The operator, in accordance with the approved plan, shall provide at or near each  
16 working face and at such other locations in the coal mine, as the director may prescribe, an ample  
17 supply of suitable materials of proper size with which to secure the roof thereof of all working  
18 places in a safe manner. Safety posts, jacks, or other approved devices shall be used to protect  
19 the workmen when roof material is being taken down, crossbars are being installed, roof bolt holes  
20 are being drilled, roof bolts are being installed and in such other circumstances as may be  
21 appropriate. Loose roof and overhanging or loose faces and ribs shall be taken down or  
22 supported. When overhangs or brows occur along rib lines they shall be promptly removed. All  
23 sections shall be maintained as near as possible on center. Except in the case of recovery work,  
24 supports knocked out shall be replaced promptly. Apprentice miners shall not be permitted to set  
25 temporary supports on a working section without the direct immediate supervision of a certified  
26 miner.

27 (c) The operator of a mine has primary responsibility to prevent injuries and deaths  
28 resulting from working under unsupported roof. Every operator shall require that no person may  
29 proceed beyond the last permanent support unless adequate temporary support is provided or  
30 temporary support is not required under an approved roof control plan and absence of such  
31 support will not pose a hazard to the miners.

32 (d) The immediate supervisor of any area in which unsupported roof is located shall not  
33 direct or knowingly permit any person to proceed beyond the last permanent support unless

34 adequate temporary support is provided or temporary support is not required under an approved  
35 roof control plan and absence of such support will not pose a hazard to the miners.

36 (e) No miner shall proceed beyond the last permanent support in violation of a direct or  
37 standing order of an operator, a foreman or an assistant foreman, unless adequate temporary  
38 support is provided or temporary support is not required under an approved roof control plan and  
39 absence of such support will not pose a hazard to the miner.

40 (f) The immediate supervisor of each miner who will be engaged in any activity involving  
41 the securing of roof or rib during a shift shall, at the onset of any such shift, orally review those  
42 parts of the roof control plan relevant to the type of mining and roof control to be pursued by such  
43 miner.

44 (g) Any action taken against a miner due, in whole or in part, to his or her refusal to work  
45 under unsupported roof, where such work would constitute a violation of this section, is prohibited  
46 as an act of discrimination pursuant to section twenty-two, article one of this chapter. Upon a  
47 finding of discrimination by the appeals board pursuant to subsection (b), section twenty-two,  
48 article one of this chapter, the miner shall be awarded by the appeals board all reliefs available  
49 pursuant to subsections (b) and (c), section twenty-two, article one of this chapter.

## HOISTING

### **§22A-2-36. Hoisting machinery; telephones; safety devices; hoisting engineers and drum runners.**

1 (a) The operator of every coal mine worked by shaft shall provide and maintain a metal  
2 tube, telephone or other approved means of communication from the top to the bottom and  
3 intermediate landings of such shafts, suitably adapted to the free passage of sound, through  
4 which conversation may be held between persons at the top and at the bottom of the shaft; a  
5 standard means of signaling; an approved safety catch, bridle chains, automatic stopping device,  
6 or automatic overwind; a sufficient cover overhead on every cage used for lowering or hoisting  
7 persons; an approved safety gate at the top of the shaft; and an adequate brake on the drum of



8 every machine used to lower or hoist persons in such shaft. Such operator shall have the  
9 machinery used for lowering and hoisting persons into or out of the mine kept in safe condition,  
10 equipped with a reliable indicator, and inspected once in each twenty-four hours by a qualified  
11 electrician. Where a hoisting engineer is required, he or she shall be readily available at all times  
12 when men are in the mine. He or she shall operate the empty cage up and down the shaft at least  
13 one round trip at the beginning of each shift there shall be cut out around the side of the hoisting  
14 shaft or driven through the solid strata at the bottom thereof, a traveling way, not less than five  
15 feet high and three feet wide to enable a person to pass the shaft in going from one side of it to  
16 the other without passing over or under the cage or other hoisting apparatus. Positive stop blocks  
17 or derails shall be placed near the top and at all intermediate landings of slopes and surface  
18 inclines and at approaches to all shaft landings. A waiting station with sufficient room, ample  
19 clearance from moving equipment, and adequate seating facilities shall be provided where men  
20 are required to wait for man trips or man cages, and the miners shall remain in such station until  
21 the man trip or man cage is available.

22 (b) No operator of any coal mine worked by shaft, slope or incline, shall place in charge of  
23 any engine or drum used for lowering or hoisting persons employed in such mine any but  
24 competent and sober engineers or drum runners; and no engineer or drum runner in charge of  
25 such machinery shall allow any person, except such as may be designated for this purpose by  
26 the operator, to interfere with any part of the machinery; and no person shall interfere with any  
27 part of the machinery; and no person shall interfere with or intimidate the engineer or drum runner  
28 in the discharge of his or her duties. Where the mine is operated or worked by shaft or slope, a  
29 minimum space of two and one-half square feet per person shall be available for each person on  
30 any cage or car where men are transported. In no instance shall more than twenty miners be  
31 transported on a cage or car without the approval of the director. No person shall ride on a loaded  
32 cage or car in any shaft, slope, or incline: *Provided*, That this does not prevent any trip rider from  
33 riding in the performance of his or her authorized duties. No engineer is required for automatically

34 operated cages, elevators, or platforms. Cages and elevators shall have an emergency power  
35 source unless provided with other escapeway facilities.

36 (c) Each automatic elevator shall be provided with a telephone or other effective  
37 communication system by which aid or assistance can be obtained promptly.

38 (d) A stop switch shall be provided in the automatic elevator compartment that will permit  
39 the elevator to be stopped at any location in the shaft.

**§22A-2-55. Protective equipment and clothing.**

1 (a) Welders and helpers shall use proper shields or goggles to protect their eyes. All  
2 employees shall have approved goggles or shields and use the same where there is a hazard  
3 from flying particles or other eye hazards.

4 (b) Employees engaged in haulage operations and all other persons employed around  
5 moving equipment on the surface and underground shall wear snug-fitting clothing.

6 (c) Protective gloves shall be worn when material which may injure hands is handled, but  
7 gloves with gauntleted cuffs shall not be worn around moving equipment.

8 (d) Safety hats and safety-toed shoes shall be worn by all persons while in or around a  
9 mine: *Provided*, That metatarsal guards are not required to be worn by persons when working in  
10 those areas of underground mine workings which average less than forty-eight inches in height  
11 as measured from the floor to the roof of the underground mine workings.

12 (e) Approved eye protection shall be worn by all persons while being transported in open-  
13 type man trips.

14 (f)(1) A self-contained self-rescue device approved by the director shall be worn by each  
15 person underground or kept within his or her immediate reach and the device shall be provided  
16 by the operator. The self-contained self-rescue device shall be adequate to protect a miner for  
17 one hour or longer. Each operator shall train each miner in the use of the device and refresher  
18 training courses for all underground employees shall be held once each quarter. Quarters shall  
19 be based on a calendar year.

20           (2) In addition to the requirements of subdivision (1) of this subsection, the operator shall  
21 also provide caches of additional self-contained self-rescue devices throughout the mine in  
22 accordance with a plan approved by the director. Each additional self-contained self-rescue  
23 device shall be adequate to protect a miner for one hour or longer. The total number of additional  
24 self-contained self-rescue devices, the total number of storage caches and the placement of each  
25 cache throughout the mine shall be established by rule pursuant to subsection (i) of this section.  
26 A luminescent sign with the words “SELF-CONTAINED SELF-RESCUER” or “SELF-  
27 CONTAINED SELF-RESCUERS” shall be conspicuously posted at each cache and luminescent  
28 direction signs shall be posted leading to each cache. Lifeline cords or other similar device, with  
29 reflective material at twenty-five foot intervals, shall be attached to each cache from the last open  
30 crosscut to the surface. The operator shall conduct weekly inspections of each cache and each  
31 lifeline cord or other similar device to ensure operability.

32           (3) Any person that, without the authorization of the operator or the director, knowingly  
33 removes or attempts to remove any self-contained self-rescue device or lifeline cord from the  
34 mine or mine site with the intent to permanently deprive the operator of the device or lifeline cord  
35 or knowingly tampers with or attempts to tamper with the device or lifeline cord shall be guilty of  
36 a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be imprisoned in a state correctional facility for not  
37 less than one year nor more than ten years or fined not less than \$10,000 nor more than \$100,000,  
38 or both.

39           (g) (1) A wireless emergency communication device approved by the director and provided  
40 by the operator shall be worn by each person underground: *Provided*, That if a miner's wireless  
41 emergency communications device shall malfunction or cease to operate then such miner shall  
42 be assigned to be in sight or sound of a certified miner until such time an operating device shall  
43 be delivered. The wireless emergency communication device shall, at a minimum, be capable of  
44 receiving emergency communications from the surface at any location throughout the mine. Each  
45 operator shall train each miner in the use of the device and provide refresher training courses for

46 all underground employees during each calendar year. The operator shall install in or around the  
47 mine any and all equipment necessary to transmit emergency communications from the surface  
48 to each wireless emergency communication device at any location throughout the mine.

49 (2) Any person that, without the authorization of the operator or the director, knowingly  
50 removes or attempts to remove any wireless emergency communication device or related  
51 equipment, from the mine or mine site with the intent to permanently deprive the operator of the  
52 device or equipment or knowingly tampers with or attempts to tamper with the device or equipment  
53 shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction shall be imprisoned in a state correctional facility  
54 for not less than one year nor more than ten years or fined not less than \$10,000 nor more than  
55 \$100,000, or both fined and confined.

56 (h) (1) A wireless tracking device approved by the director and provided by the operator  
57 shall be worn by each person underground. In the event of an accident or other emergency, the  
58 tracking device shall, at a minimum, be capable of providing real-time monitoring of the physical  
59 location of each person underground: *Provided*, That no person shall discharge or discriminate  
60 against any miner based on information gathered by a wireless tracking device during  
61 nonemergency monitoring. Each operator shall train each miner in the use of the device and  
62 provide refresher training courses for all underground employees during each calendar year. The  
63 operator shall install in or around the mine all equipment necessary to provide real-time  
64 emergency monitoring of the physical location of each person underground.

65 (2) Any person that, without the authorization of the operator or the director, knowingly  
66 removes or attempts to remove any wireless tracking device or related equipment, approved by  
67 the director, from a mine or mine site with the intent to permanently deprive the operator of the  
68 device or equipment or knowingly tampers with or attempts to tamper with the device or equipment  
69 shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction shall be imprisoned in a state correctional facility  
70 for not less than one year nor more than ten years or fined not less than \$10,000 nor more than  
71 \$100,000, or both fined and confined.

72 (i) The director may promulgate emergency and legislative rules to implement and enforce  
73 this section pursuant to the provisions of article three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code.

**§22A-2-66. Accident; notice; investigation by Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training.**

1 (a) For the purposes of this section, the term accident means:

2 (1) The death of an individual at a mine;

3 (2) An injury to an individual at a mine which has a reasonable potential to cause death;

4 (3) The entrapment of an individual;

5 (4) The unplanned inundation of a mine by a liquid or gas;

6 (5) The unplanned ignition or explosion of gas or dust;

7 (6) The unplanned ignition or explosion of a blasting agent or an explosive;

8 (7) An unplanned fire in or about a mine not extinguished within five minutes of ignition;

9 (8) An unplanned roof fall at or above the anchorage zone in active workings where roof  
10 bolts are in use or an unplanned roof or rib fall in active workings that impairs ventilation or  
11 impedes passage;

12 (9) A coal or rock outburst that causes withdrawal of miners or which disrupts regular  
13 mining activity for more than one hour;

14 (10) An unstable condition at an impoundment, refuse pile or culm bank which requires  
15 emergency action in order to prevent failure, or which causes individuals to evacuate an area, or  
16 the failure of an impoundment, refuse pile or culm bank;

17 (11) Damage to hoisting equipment in a shaft or slope which endangers an individual or  
18 which interferes with use of the equipment for more than thirty minutes; and

19 (12) An event at a mine which causes death or bodily injury to an individual not at the mine  
20 at the time the event occurs.

21 (b) Whenever any accident occurs in or about any coal mine or the machinery connected  
22 therewith, it is the duty of the operator or the mine foreman in charge of the mine to give notice,  
23 within fifteen minutes of ascertaining the occurrence of an accident, to the Mine and Industrial

24 Accident Emergency Operations Center at the statewide telephone number established by the  
25 Director of the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management pursuant to the  
26 provisions of article five-b, chapter fifteen of this code stating the particulars of the accident:  
27 *Provided*, That the operator or the mine foreman in charge of the mine may comply with this notice  
28 requirement by immediately providing notice to the appropriate local organization for emergency  
29 services as defined in section eight, article five of said chapter, or the appropriate local emergency  
30 telephone system operator as defined in article six, chapter twenty-four of this code: *Provided*,  
31 *however*, That if, immediately upon ascertaining the occurrence of an accident, the operator or  
32 the mine foreman in charge of the mine provides notice to the local organization for emergency  
33 services as defined in section eight, article five, chapter fifteen of this code, or the appropriate  
34 local emergency telephone system operator as defined in article six, chapter twenty-four of this  
35 code, then, in order to comply with this subsection, the operator or mine foreman in charge of the  
36 mine shall also give notice to the Mine and Industrial Accident Emergency Operations Center at  
37 the statewide number identified in this subsection within fifteen minutes of completing the  
38 telephone call to the local organization for emergency services or the appropriate local emergency  
39 telephone system operator, as applicable: *Provided further* That nothing in this subsection shall  
40 be construed to relieve the operator from any reporting or notification requirement under federal  
41 law.

42 (c) The Director of the Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training shall impose, pursuant  
43 to rules authorized in this section, a civil administrative penalty of up to \$100,000 on the operator  
44 if it is determined that the operator or the mine foremen in charge of the mine failed to give  
45 immediate notice as required in this section. The director may later amend the assessment of a  
46 penalty under this section if so warranted: *Provided*, That the director may waive imposition of the  
47 civil administrative penalty at any time if he or she finds that the failure to give immediate notice  
48 was caused by circumstances wholly outside the control of the operator: *Provided, however*, That  
49 the assessment of the civil administrative penalty set forth in this subsection may be appealed to

50 the Board of Appeals, and the Board of Appeals may, by a vote of two Board of Appeals Members,  
51 reduce the amount of the civil administrative penalty upon a finding of mitigating circumstances  
52 warranting the imposition of a lesser amount.

53 (d) If anyone is fatally injured, the inspector shall immediately go to the scene of the  
54 accident and make recommendations and render assistance as he or she may deem necessary  
55 for the future safety of the men and investigate the cause of the explosion or accident and make  
56 a record. He or she shall preserve the record with the other records in his or her office. The cost  
57 of the investigation records shall be paid by the Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training. A  
58 copy shall be furnished to the operator and other interested parties. To enable him or her to make  
59 an investigation, he or she has the power to compel the attendance of witnesses and to administer  
60 oaths or affirmations. The director has the right to appear and testify and to offer any testimony  
61 that may be relevant to the questions and to cross-examine witnesses.

**§22A-2-77. Quarterly report by operator of mine; exception as to certain inactive mines.**

1 On or before the end of each quarter, the operator of each mine, regulated under the  
2 provisions of this chapter or article three or four, chapter twenty-two of this code, shall file with  
3 the director a report with respect thereto covering the next preceding quarter which shall reflect  
4 the number of accidents which have occurred at each such mine, the number of persons  
5 employed, the days worked and the actual raw tonnage mined. Quarters are based on a calendar  
6 year. Such report shall be made upon forms furnished by the director. Other provisions of this  
7 section to the contrary notwithstanding, no such report shall be required with respect to any mine  
8 on approved inactive status if no employees were present at such mine at any time during the  
9 next preceding calendar month.

**ARTICLE 7. BOARD OF MINER TRAINING, EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION**

**§22A-7-7. Continuing education requirements for underground mine foreman-fire boss.**

1 (a) An underground mine foreman-fire boss certified pursuant to this article on or after the  
2 effective date of this section shall complete the continuing education requirements in this section

3 within two years of their certification and every two years thereafter. The continuing education  
4 requirements of this section may not be satisfied by the completion of other training requirements  
5 mandated by the provisions of this chapter.

6 (b) In order to receive continuing education credit pursuant to this section, a mine foreman-  
7 fire boss shall satisfactorily complete a mine foreman-fire boss continuing education course  
8 approved by the board and taught by a qualified instructor approved by the director. The mine  
9 foreman-fire boss shall not suffer a loss in pay while attending a continuing education course. The  
10 mine foreman-fire boss shall submit documentation to the office certified by the instructor that  
11 indicates the required continuing education has been completed prior to the deadlines set forth in  
12 this subsection: *Provided*, That a mine foreman-fire boss may submit documentation of continuing  
13 education completed in another state for approval and acceptance by the board.

14 (c) The mine foreman-fire boss shall complete at least eight hours of continuing education  
15 every two years.

16 (d) The content of the continuing education course shall include, but not be limited to:

17 (1) Selected provisions of this chapter and 30 U. S. C. § 801, *et seq.*;

18 (2) Selected provisions of the West Virginia and federal underground coal mine health and  
19 safety rules and regulations;

20 (3) The responsibilities of a mine foreman-fire boss;

21 (4) Selected policies and memoranda of the Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training,  
22 the Board of Coal Mine Health and Safety, the Board of Miner Training, Education and  
23 Certification, and from any safety analysis performed by the company.

24 (5) A review of fatality and accident trends in underground coal mines; and

25 (6) Other subjects as determined by the Board of Miner Training, Education and  
26 Certification. The board shall solicit input from mining companies on the substance of the training  
27 and discuss how the training shall be scheduled during the year.

28 (e) The board may approve alternative training programs tailored to specific mines.



29           (f) A mine foreman-fire boss who fails to complete the requirements of this section shall  
30 have his or her certification suspended pending completion of the continuing education  
31 requirements. During the pendency of the suspension, the individual may not perform statutory  
32 duties assigned to a mine foreman-fire boss under West Virginia law. The office shall send notice  
33 of any suspension to the last address the certified mine foreman-fire boss reported to the director.  
34 If the requirements are not met within two years of the suspension date, the director may file a  
35 petition with the board of appeals pursuant to the procedures set forth in section thirty-one, article  
36 one of this chapter and, upon determining that the requirements have not been met, the board of  
37 appeals may revoke the mine foreman-fire boss' certification, which shall not be renewed except  
38 upon successful completion of the examination prescribed by law for mine foremen-fire bosses  
39 or upon completion of other training requirements established by the board: *Provided*, That an  
40 individual having his or her mine foreman-fire boss certification suspended pursuant to this section  
41 who also holds a valid mine foreman-fire boss certification from another state may have the  
42 suspension lifted by completing training requirements established by the board.

43           (g) The office shall make a program of instruction that meets the requirements for  
44 continuing education set forth in this section regularly available in regions of the State, based on  
45 demand, for individuals possessing mine foreman-fire boss certifications who are not serving in a  
46 mine foreman-fire boss capacity: *Provided*, That the office may collect a fee from program  
47 participants to offset the cost of the program.

48           (h) The office shall make available to operators and other interested parties a list of  
49 individuals whose mine foreman-fire boss certification is in suspension or has been revoked.



The Joint Committee on Enrolled Bills hereby certifies that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

.....  
*Chairman, House Committee*

.....  
*Chairman, Senate Committee*

Originating in the House.

In effect ninety days from passage.

.....  
*Clerk of the House of Delegates*

.....  
*Clerk of the Senate*

.....  
*Speaker of the House of Delegates*

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*President of the Senate*

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The within ..... this the.....  
day of ....., 2016.

.....  
*Governor*