

Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Interior

§ 715.13

State and local governments shall be interpreted as requiring, in like manner, consultation with or notification to tribal governments. OSM shall consult with the Bureau of Indian Affairs with respect to special requirements relating to the protection of noncoal resources and with the Bureau of Land Management with respect to the requirements relating to the development, production, and recovery of mineral resources on Indian lands.

[42 FR 62680, Dec. 13, 1977, as amended at 44 FR 6682, Feb. 1, 1979; 59 FR 43419, Aug. 23, 1994]

§ 715.12 Signs and markers.

(a) *Specifications.* All signs required to be posted shall be of a standard design that can be seen and read easily and shall be made of durable material. The signs and other markers shall be maintained during all operations to which they pertain and shall conform to local ordinances and codes.

(b) *Mine and permit identification signs.* Signs identifying the mine area shall be displayed at all points of access to the permit area from public roads and highways. Signs shall show the name, business address, and telephone number of the permittee and identification numbers of current mining and reclamation permits or other authorizations to operate. Such signs shall not be removed until after release of all bonds.

(c) *Perimeter markers.* The perimeter of the permit area shall be clearly marked by durable and easily recognized markers, or by other means approved by the regulatory authority.

(d) *Buffer zone markers.* Buffer zones as defined in § 715.17 shall be marked in a manner consistent with the perimeter markers along the interior boundary of the buffer zone.

(e) *Blasting signs.* If blasting is necessary to conduct surface coal mining operations, signs reading "Blasting Area" shall be displayed conspicuously at the edge of blasting areas along access and haul roads within the mine property. Signs reading "Blasting Area" and explaining the blasting warning and all-clear signals shall be posted at all entrances to the permit area.

(f) *Topsoil markers.* Where topsoil or other vegetation-supporting material is segregated and stockpiled according to § 715.16(c), the stockpiled material shall be marked. Markers shall remain in place until the material is removed.

§ 715.13 Postmining use of land.

(a) *General.* All disturbed areas shall be restored in a timely manner (1) to conditions that are capable of supporting the uses which they were capable of supporting before any mining, or (2) to higher or better uses achievable under criteria and procedures of paragraph (d) of this section.

(b) *Determining premining use of land.* The premining uses of land to which the postmining land use is compared shall be those uses which the land previously supported if the land had not been previously mined and had been properly managed.

(1) The postmining land use for land that has been previously mined and not reclaimed shall be judged on the basis of the highest and best use that can be achieved and is compatible with surrounding areas.

(2) The postmining land use for land that has received improper management shall be judged on the basis of the premining use of surrounding lands that have received proper management.

(3) If the premining use of the land was changed within 5 years of the beginning of mining, the comparison of postmining use to premining use shall include a comparison with the historic use of the land as well as its use immediately preceding mining.

(c) *Land-use categories.* Land use is categorized in the following groups. Change from one to another land use category in premining to postmining constitutes an alternate land use and the permittee shall meet the requirements of paragraph (d) of this section and all other applicable environmental protection performance standards of this chapter.

(1) *Heavy industry.* Manufacturing facilities, powerplants, airports or similar facilities.

(2) *Light industry and commercial services.* Office buildings, stores, parking facilities, apartment houses, motels, hotels, or similar facilities.