

**PROPOSED REGULATION OF THE  
STATE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**LCB File No. R090-00**

June 8, 2000

EXPLANATION – Matter in *italics* is new; matter in brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AUTHORITY: §§1-4, NRS 519A.160.

**Section 1.** Chapter 519A of NAC is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

*“Process fluid stabilization” means binding, containing or otherwise treating contaminants in a fluid, including, without limitation, meteoric waters, that have intentionally or unintentionally been introduced into a heap leaching facility or tailings facility to prevent the contaminants from degrading the waters in this state through naturally occurring environmental conditions which may be reasonably expected at the mine site.*

**Sec. 2.** NAC 519A.010 is hereby amended to read as follows:

519A.010 As used in NAC 519A.010 to 519A.415, inclusive, unless the context otherwise requires, the words and terms defined in NAC 519A.015 to 519A.095, inclusive, *and section 1 of this regulation* have the meanings ascribed to them in those sections.

**Sec. 3.** NAC 519A.345 is hereby amended to read as follows:

519A.345 The division may, if appropriate, require an operator of a mining operation to reclaim:

1. Roads and drill pads by:

(a) Recontouring or regrading to round off, cut and fill slopes to the original contour or to approximate the form of the land before its disturbance;

(b) Removing culverts;

(c) Ripping or scarifying the surface;

(d) Constructing water bars;

(e) Revegetation; and

(f) Restoring or stabilizing drainage areas or streambeds.

2. Drill holes from exploration by plugging the holes with the minimum surface plug required pursuant to chapter 534 of NRS.

3. Waste and development rock piles by:

(a) Regrading to round off sharp edges, enhance the stability, reduce susceptibility to erosion and facilitate efforts for revegetation;

(b) Revegetation; and

(c) Diverting run-on.

4. Dams for tailings ponds by:

(a) Covering with waste rock, topsoil or growth medium;

(b) Revegetation; and

(c) Rendering the dam incapable of storing any mobile fluid in a quantity which could pose a threat to the stability of the dam or to public safety.

5. Impoundments for tailings by:

(a) Regrading to promote run-off and reduce infiltration;

(b) Covering with waste rock, topsoil or growth medium;

(c) Revegetation; ~~and~~

(d) *Process fluid stabilization; and*

(e) Diverting run-on.

6. Heaps from leaching by:

(a) Regrading to enhance structural stability, promote run-off, reduce infiltration and control erosion;

(b) Covering with waste rock, topsoil or growth medium;

(c) Revegetation;

(d) ~~[Stabilization;]~~ *Process fluid stabilization; and*

(e) Diverting run-on.

7. Solution ponds, settling ponds and other nontailings impoundments by:

(a) Backfilling and regrading to approximate the natural land form; and

(b) Restoring the regime of the surface water to the regime that existed before the disturbance.

8. Buildings, foundations, facilities, structures and other equipment by:

(a) Demolishing to the level of the foundation and burying the demolished items on the site in conformance with applicable requirements for the disposal of solid waste;

(b) Salvaging and sale;

(c) Disposal off of the site in conformance with applicable requirements for the disposal of solid waste; and

(d) Continuing use in a manner consistent with the post-mining land use.

9. Open pit mines by:

(a) Performing activities that will provide for public safety;

(b) Stabilizing pit walls or rock faces where required for public safety;

- (c) Constructing and maintaining berms, fences or other means of restricting access;
- (d) Creating a lake for recreational use, wildlife or other uses; and
- (e) Revegetation.

FLUSH Reclamation of open pits or rock faces does not require backfilling although backfilling in whole or in part with waste rock from an adjacent mining operation may be encouraged if backfilling is feasible and does not create additional negative environmental impacts.

10. Underground mines by:

- (a) Sealing shafts, adits, portals and tunnels to prevent access; and
- (b) Constructing and maintaining berms, fences or other means of restricting access.

**Sec. 4.** NAC 519A.360 is hereby amended to read as follows:

519A.360 1. The operator shall provide surety in an amount sufficient to ensure reclamation of:

- (a) The entire area to be affected by his project or operation; or
- (b) A portion of the area to be affected if, as a condition of the issuance of the permit, filing additional surety is required before the operator disturbs land not covered by the initial surety.

2. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 6, the amount of surety required must be based on an estimate of the cost of executing the plan for reclamation which would be incurred by the state or federal agency having jurisdiction over the land.

3. The operator's estimate of the cost for reclamation must be based on either:

- (a) The costs of equipment rental, operation and labor appropriate for the geographic area;
- (b) Estimated costs provided by an outside contractor; or

(c) Any other method which is acceptable to the administrator, the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Forest Service or another federal land management agency, if applicable.

4. In determining the cost of executing the plan for reclamation, *the operator shall consider* all activities in the plan for reclamation ~~[must be considered,]~~ *that are required by NAC 519A.010 to 519A.415, inclusive, or chapter 519A of NRS*, including, if appropriate:

(a) Earth moving, regrading, stabilization of heaps and dumps, recontouring of roads and erosion control;

(b) *Process fluid stabilization*;

(c) Revegetation, preparation of seedbed and planting;

~~[(e)]~~ (d) Demolition of buildings and other structures;

~~[(d)]~~ (e) Removal and disposal or salvage of buildings, structures, equipment, piping, scrap and reagents;

~~[(e)]~~ (f) Any ongoing or long-term activities which are required to maintain the effectiveness of reclamation or are necessary in lieu of reclamation, including periodic clean-out of sediment basins or maintenance of berms and fences which are used to prevent access to areas which pose a threat to the public safety;

~~[(f)]~~ (g) Equipment mobilization and demobilization; and

~~[(g)]~~ (h) Administration and management by the division, the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Forest Service and another federal land management agency, if applicable.

5. In determining the cost of executing the plan for reclamation, the operator ~~[is not required to]~~ *shall not* consider the cost of ~~[environmental stabilization, remediation and neutralization or any other]~~ *any* activity not *included in the plan for reclamation or not* required

by NAC 519A.010 to 519A.415, inclusive, or chapter 519A of NRS. This subsection does not limit in any way the authorities of the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Forest Service or another federal land management agency to require surety for purposes other than those of NAC 519A.010 to 519A.415, inclusive, and chapter 519A of NRS.

6. The department shall require surety in the amount prescribed in subsections 2 to 5, inclusive, unless the operator demonstrates to the satisfaction of the administrator that a lesser amount will be sufficient to ensure that the required reclamation will be completed. The division shall consider:

- (a) The financial strength of the company;
- (b) The value of the assets of the company;
- (c) Past reclamation performance of the company;
- (d) Extent of proposed concurrent reclamation;
- (e) Ease of implementation of the proposed reclamation plan; and
- (f) Other factors presented by the applicant.