

RCW 78.44.087 Performance security required—Department authority. (1) The department should ensure that a sufficient performance security is available to reclaim each surface mine permitted under this chapter. To ensure sufficient funds are available:

(a) The department shall not issue a reclamation permit, except to public or governmental agencies, until the applicant has either deposited with the department an acceptable performance security on forms prescribed by the department that is deemed adequate by the department to cover reclamation costs or has complied with the blanket performance security option in RCW 78.44.350. A public or governmental agency shall not be required to post performance security.

(b) No person may create a disturbed area that meets or exceeds the minimum threshold for a reclamation permit without first submitting an adequate and acceptable performance security to the department and complying with all requirements of this chapter.

(2) The department may refuse to accept any performance security that the department, for any reason, deems to be inadequate to cover reclamation costs or is not in a form that is acceptable to the department.

(3) Acceptable forms of performance security are:

(a) Bank letters of credit acceptable to the department or irrevocable bank letters of credit from a bank or financial institution or organization authorized to transact business in the United States;

(b) A cash deposit;

(c) Other forms of performance securities acceptable to the department as determined by rule;

(d) An assignment of a savings account;

(e) A savings certificate in a Washington bank on an assignment form prescribed by the department;

(f) Approved participants in a state security pool if one is established; or

(g) A corporate surety bond executed in favor of the department by a corporation authorized to do business in the state of Washington under Title 48 RCW and authorized by the department.

(4) The performance security shall be conditioned upon the faithful performance of the requirements set forth in this chapter, the rules adopted under it, and the reclamation permit.

(5) (a) The department must determine the amount of the performance security as prescribed by this subsection.

(b) The department may determine the amount of the performance security based on the estimated cost of: (i) Completing reclamation according to the requirements of this chapter; or (ii) the reclamation permit for the area to be surface mined during the upcoming thirty-six months and any previously disturbed areas that have not been reclaimed.

(c) The department may determine the amount of the performance security based on an engineering cost estimate for reclamation that is provided by the permit holder. The engineering cost estimate must be prepared using engineering principles and methods that are acceptable to the department. If the department does not approve the engineering cost estimate, the department shall determine the amount of the performance security using a standardized performance security formula developed by the department by rule.

(6) The department may recalculate a surface mine's performance security based on subsection (5) of this section. When the department recalculates a performance security, the new calculation will not be prejudiced by the existence of any previous calculation. A new performance security must be submitted to the department within thirty days of the department's written request.

(7) Liability under the performance security and the permit holder's obligation to maintain the calculated performance security amount shall be maintained until the surface mine is reclaimed, unless released as hereinafter provided. Partial drawings will proportionately reduce the value of a performance security but will not extinguish the remaining value. Liability under the performance security may be released only when the surface mine is reclaimed as evidenced by the department in writing or after the department receives and approves a substitute performance security. The department will notify the permit holder, and surety if applicable, when reclamation is accepted by the department as complete or upon the department's acceptance of an alternate security. The liability of the surety shall not exceed the amount of security required by this section and the department's reasonable legal fees to recover the security.

(8) Any interest or appreciation on the performance security shall be held by the department until the surface mine is reclaimed. The department may collect and use appreciation or interest accrued on a performance security to the same extent as for the underlying performance security. If the permit holder meets its obligations under this chapter, rules adopted under this chapter, and its approved reclamation permit and plan by completing reclamation, the department will return any unused performance security and accrued interest or appreciation.

(9) No other state agency or local government other than the department shall require performance security for the purposes of surface mine reclamation. However, nothing in this section prohibits a state agency or local government from requiring a performance security when the state agency or local government is acting in its capacity as a landowner and contracting for extraction-related activities on state or local government property.

(10) The department may enter into written agreements with federal agencies in order to avoid redundant bonding of any surface mine that is located on both federal and nonfederal lands in Washington state. [2006 c 341 s 3; 1997 c 186 s 1; 1995 c 223 s 3; 1994 c 232 s 23; 1993 c 518 s 15.]

Effective date—1994 c 232 ss 1-5, 9-17, and 23-31: See RCW 78.56.901.

Captions—Severability—Effective date—1993 c 518: See notes following RCW 78.44.010.