



Public Service Commission
State of North Dakota

AUG 13 2009

COMMISSIONERS

Kevin Cramer
Tony Clark
Brian P. Kalk

Executive Secretary
Darrell Nitschke

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13 August 2009

Mr. John Walstad
Code Revisor
North Dakota Legislative Council
State Capitol
600 East Boulevard, 2nd Floor
Bismarck, ND 58505-0360

Re: Notice of Intent to Amend Administrative Rules
Case Nos. GS-09-67 and RC-09-543

Dear Mr. Walstad:

Enclosed please find:

- Commission Motion Proposing Amendments, Scheduling Hearing, Issuing Notice of Intent to Amend Rules and Notice of Hearing, and Issuing an abbreviated Notice
- Notice of Intent to Amend Administrative Rules and Notice of Hearing
- Abbreviated Notice of Intent to Amend Administrative Rules and Notice of Hearing
- Proposed Gas Pipeline Safety administrative rule changes
- Proposed Reclamation administrative rule changes

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call.

Best Regards,

Illona A. Jeffcoat-Sacco
General Counsel

Received in the office of the
Legislative Council this 3rd day of August, 2009

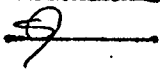
By: Phyllis R. Markey

Enclosures

8 RC-09-543 Filed: 8/13/2009 Pages: 14
Letter to Legislative Council Enclosing Notice of
Intent to Amend Administrative Rules

12 GS-09-67 Filed: 8/13/2009 Pages: 14
Letter to Legislative Council Enclosing Notice of
Intent to Amend Administrative Rules

APPROVED

DATE: 8-12-09


MOTION

August 12, 2009

**Public Service Commission
2009 Gas Pipeline Safety Rules
Rulemaking**

Case No. GS-09-67

**Public Service Commission
Reclamation
Rulemaking**

Case No. RC-09-543

I move the Commission propose the following amendments to the North Dakota Administrative Code, schedule a hearing for 10:00 a.m., on September 16, 2009, issue a Notice of Intent to Amend Administrative Rules and Notice of Public Hearing, and issue an abbreviated Notice of Intent to Amend Administrative Rules and Notice of Public Hearing for publication in each official county newspaper throughout the state as required by law.

Article 69-09 Amendments to Gas Pipeline Safety

Article 69-05.2 Amendments to Reclamation Rules

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**STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

**Public Service Commission
2009 Gas Pipeline Safety Rules
Rulemaking**

Case No. GS-09-67

**Public Service Commission
Reclamation
Rulemaking**

Case No. RC-09-543

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO AMEND ADMINISTRATIVE RULES
AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

August 12, 2009

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Public Service Commission will hold a public hearing to address proposed amendments to three sections of the North Dakota Administrative Code. The hearing will be held at **10:00 a.m., on September 16, 2009, in the Commission Hearing Room, 12th floor, State Capitol, Bismarck, North Dakota.** The proposed revisions to the North Dakota Administrative Code are as follows:

Reclamation: Case No. RC-09-543

The surface coal mining and reclamation law was amended by the 2009 Legislature to reduce the revegetation responsibility period from ten years to five years for eligible lands that are re-mined. The proposed changes to the North Dakota Administrative Code Sections 69-05.2-09-02 and 69-05.2-22-07 will amend permit application requirements and revegetation success standards to reflect this statutory change. The proposed amendment is not expected to have an impact on the regulated community in excess of \$50,000.

Gas Safety – Gas Pipeline Safety: Case No. GS-09-67

In order to continue the Commission's role as an agent for the federal pipeline safety program, the proposed change to the North Dakota Administrative Code Section 69-09-03-02 adopts by reference changes made to federal pipeline safety regulations since December 31, 2006. The proposed amendment is not expected to have an impact on the regulated community in excess of \$50,000.

All of the proposed rule changes and any statements concerning Regulatory Analyses, Small Entity Analyses and Takings Assessments may be reviewed at the

Public Service Commission's offices on the 12th floor of the State Capitol, Bismarck, North Dakota. To obtain a copy of the proposed rule changes, or any statements concerning the Regulatory Analyses, Small Entity Analyses and Takings Assessments contact the Public Service Commission at 600 East Boulevard Avenue, Department 408, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0480, or 701-328-2400, toll free 1-877-245-6685. This information is also available to view on our web site at www.psc.state.nd.us under Formal Actions/Case Search.


Interested persons may submit written comments on the proposed rules. Written comments should be filed with Darrell Nitschke, Executive Secretary, Public Service Commission, 600 East Boulevard Avenue, Department 408, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0480. The comment period closes 10 days after the hearing. Comments received by September 26th will be considered.

If individuals require any auxiliary aids or services, such as readers, signers, or Braille materials, please notify, Darrell Nitschke, Executive Secretary, at least 24 hours prior to the hearing. He can be contacted at the following numbers: 701-328-2400 and Relay North Dakota TTY: 1-800-366-6888.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION



Tony Clark
Commissioner



Kevin Cramer
Chairman



Brian P. Kalk
Commissioner

NOTICE OF INTENT TO AMEND ADMINISTRATIVE RULES AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

August 12, 2009

TAKE NOTICE that the Public Service Commission will hold a public hearing to address proposed amendments to the N.D. Admin. Code, relating to surface coal mining and reclamation permit application requirements and revegetation success standards, and the adoption by reference of federal gas safety requirements, at 10:00 a.m., September 16, 2009, in the Commission Hearing Room, 12th floor, State Capitol, Bismarck, North Dakota.

A copy of the proposed rules may be obtained by writing the Public Service Commission, 600 East Boulevard Avenue, Department 408, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0480 or by calling 701-328-2400, toll free 1-877-245-6685 or Relay North Dakota TTY: 1-800-366-6888. This information is also available to view on our web site at www.psc.state.nd.us under Formal Actions/Case Search. Also, written comments may be submitted to the Public Service Commission at the above address, until September 26, 2009.

If you plan to attend the public hearing and will need special facilities or assistance relating to a disability, please contact the Public Service Commission by telephone or by writing to the address above at least 24 hours prior to the public hearing.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION



Tony Clark
Commissioner



Kevin Cramer
Chairman



Brian P. Kalk
Commissioner

**CHAPTER 69-09-03
GAS PIPELINE SAFETY**

69-09-03-02. Adoption of regulations. The following parts of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations in effect as of ~~December 31, 2006~~ August 1, 2009 are adopted by reference:

1. Part 190 - Department of Transportation Pipeline Safety Enforcement Procedures.
2. Part 191 - Department of Transportation Regulations for Transportation of Natural Gas by Pipeline; Reports of Leaks.
3. Part 192 - Transportation of Natural Gas and Other Gas by Pipeline: Minimum Safety Standards.
4. Part 199 - Control of Drug Use in Natural Gas; Liquefied Natural Gas, and Hazardous Liquids Pipelines.

Copies of these regulations may be obtained from:

Public Service Commission
600 East Boulevard, Dept. 408
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480

History: Effective June 1, 1984; amended effective July 1, 1986; January 1, 1988; March 1, 1990; February 1, 1992; August 1, 1993; August 1, 1994; February 1, 1996; July 1, 1997; July 1, 1998; September 1, 1999; August 1, 2000; January 1, 2002, November 1, 2003; May 1, 2005; July 1, 2006; April 1, 2008; _____, 2009.

General Authority: NDCC 28-32-02

Law Implemented: NDCC 49-02-01.2

CHAPTER 69-05.2-09
PERMIT APPLICATIONS - PERMIT AREA - REQUIREMENTS FOR
OPERATION AND RECLAMATION PLANS

69-05.2-09-02. Permit applications - Operation plans - Maps and plans. Each application must contain an appropriate combination of 1:4,800 scale topographic maps, planimetric maps, and plans of the proposed permit and adjacent areas showing:

1. Scale, date, permit boundaries, company name, legal subdivision boundaries, and legend.
2. Lands to be affected throughout the operation and any change in a facility or feature caused by the operations, if the existing facility or feature was shown under chapter 69-05.2-08.
3. The boundaries of areas to be affected during the permit term according to the sequence of mining and reclamation operations and a description of size and timing of operations for each coal removal subarea.
4. Pit layout and proposed sequence of mining operations, crop line, spoil placement areas, final graded spoil line, highwall areas to be backsloped, and areas for stockpiling suitable plant growth material or other suitable strata.
5. Location of proposed surface water management structures and identification of permanent water impoundments or stream channel alignments.
6. Location of coal processing waste dams and embankments under section 69-05.2-09-09, and fill areas for the disposal of initial cut and other excess spoil under section 69-05.2-09-14 and North Dakota Century Code section 38-14.1-24.
7. Buildings, utility corridors, proposed and existing haul roads, mine railways, and other support facilities.
8. Each coal storage, cleaning and loading area, and each coal waste and noncoal waste storage area. For noncoal wastes that will be disposed of in the proposed permit area, the applicant must provide a description of any wastes listed under subdivision i of subsection 2 of section 33-20-02.1-01 and any other wastes requiring a permit from the state department of health. The location of any such disposal areas must be shown on a map of the permit area.
9. Each explosive storage and handling facility.

10. Each air pollution collection and control facility.
11. Each habitat area to be used to protect and enhance fish and wildlife and related environmental values.
12. Each source of waste and each waste disposal facility relating to coal processing or pollution control.
13. Each bond area, scheduled according to the proposed sequence of operations. Include the bond or guarantee amount for each area.
14. If an applicant proposes to remine or otherwise disturb lands that were affected by coal mining activities prior to January 1, 1970:
 - a. Detailed maps and other available information that clearly depicts the boundaries of the site that was previously affected by mining activities before January 1, 1970. This includes the identification any sinkholes and other features that are the result of any past underground coal mining activities.
 - b. The applicant must identify and describe potential environmental and safety problems related to prior mining activity at the site and those that could be reasonably anticipated to occur. This identification must be based on a due diligence investigation which includes visual observations at the site, a record review of past mining at the site, and any necessary environmental sampling tailored to the current condition of the site.
 - c. With regard to potential environmental and safety problems referred to in subdivision b, a description of the mitigative measures that will be taken to ensure that the applicable reclamation requirements can be met.

Maps and plans required under subsections 5, 6, and 12 must be prepared by, or under the direction of, and certified by a qualified registered professional engineer, a qualified registered land surveyor, or qualified professional geologist with assistance from experts in related fields. However, maps, plans, and cross sections submitted according to section 69-05.2-09-09 may only be prepared by, or under the direction of, and certified by a qualified registered professional engineer or qualified registered land surveyor.

History: Effective August 1, 1980; amended effective June 1, 1983; June 1, 1986; May 1, 1990; June 1, 1997:_____.

General Authority: NDCC 38-14.1-03

Law Implemented: NDCC 38-14.1-14

69-05.2-22-07. Performance standards - Revegetation - Standards for success.

1. Success of revegetation must be measured by using statistically valid techniques approved by the commission. Comparison of ground cover and productivity may be made on the basis of reference areas, through the use of standards in technical guides published by the United States department of agriculture, or through the use of other approved standards. If reference areas are used, the management of the reference area during the responsibility period required in subsection 2 must be comparable to that required for the approved postmining land use of the permit area. If standards are used, they must be approved by the commission and the office of surface mining reclamation and enforcement. Approved standards are contained in the commission's Standards for Evaluation of Revegetation Success and Recommended Procedures for Pre- and Postmining Vegetation Assessments.
2. The period of responsibility under the performance bond requirements of section 69-05.2-12-09 will begin following augmented seeding, planting, fertilization, irrigation, or other work, except for cropland and prime farmland where the period of responsibility begins at the date of initial planting of the crop being grown or a precropland mixture of grasses and legumes, and must continue for not less than ten years. However, for eligible lands that are remined, the revegetation responsibility period must continue for not less than five years.
3. Vegetation establishment, for the purpose of the third stage bond release provided for in subdivision c of subsection 7 of North Dakota Century Code section 38-14.1-17, will be determined for each postmining land use according to the following procedures:
 - a. For native grassland, tame pastureland, and fish and wildlife habitat where the vegetation type is grassland, ground cover on the permit area must be equal to or greater than that of the approved reference area or standard with ninety percent statistical confidence. All species used in determining ground cover must be perennial species not detrimental to the approved postmining land use.
 - b. For cropland, vegetation will be considered established after the successful seeding of the crop being grown or a precropland mixture of grasses and legumes.
 - c. For prime farmland, annual average crop production from the permit area must be equal to or greater than that of the approved

reference area or standard with ninety percent statistical confidence for a minimum of three crop years.

- d. For woodland, shelterbelts, and fish and wildlife habitat where the vegetation type is woodland, the number of trees and shrubs must be equal to or greater than the approved standard. Understory growth must be controlled. Erosion must be adequately controlled by mulch or site characteristics.
 - e. For fish and wildlife habitat where the vegetation type is wetland, the basin must exhibit the capacity to hold water and support wetland vegetation. Ground cover of the contiguous areas must be adequate to control erosion.
4. The success of revegetation on the permit area at the time of final bond release must be determined for each postmining land use according to the following:
- a. For native grassland, the following must be achieved for any two years after year six of the responsibility period:
 - (1) Ground cover and productivity of the permit area must be equal to or greater than that of the approved reference area or standard with ninety percent statistical confidence; and
 - (2) Diversity, seasonality, and permanence of the vegetation of the permit area must equal or exceed the approved standard.
 - b. For tame pastureland, ground cover and productivity of the permit area must be equal to or greater than that of the approved standard with ninety percent statistical confidence for any two years after year six of the responsibility period.
 - c. For cropland, crop production from the permit area must be equal to or greater than that of the approved reference area or standard with ninety percent statistical confidence for any two years after year six of the responsibility period.
 - d. For prime farmlands, a showing that the requirements for the restoration of productivity as specified in subdivision c of subsection 3 have been met and that the ten-year period of responsibility has elapsed.

- e. For woodlands and fish and wildlife habitat where the vegetation type is woodland, the following must be achieved during the growing season of the last year of the responsibility period:
 - (1) The number of woody plants established on the permit area must be equal to or greater than the number of live woody plants of the same life form of the approved standard with ninety percent statistical confidence. Trees, shrubs, half-shrubs, root crowns or root sprouts used in determining success of stocking must meet the following criteria:
 - (a) Be healthy;
 - (b) Be in place for at least two growing seasons; and
 - (c) If any replanting of woody plants took place during the responsibility period, the total number planted during the last six years of that period must be less than twenty percent of the total number of woody plants required. Any replanting must be by means of transplants to allow for adequate accounting of plant stocking; and
 - (d) Volunteer trees and shrubs of approved species will be considered at least two years of age and can be counted toward meeting success standards; however, volunteer trees must be at least thirty inches (76 centimeters) in height to be included in the count. Suckers on shrubby vegetation can be counted as volunteer plants when it is evident the shrub community is vigorous and expanding;
 - (2) The ground cover must be equal to or greater than ninety percent of the ground cover of the approved standard with ninety percent statistical confidence and must be adequate to control erosion; and
 - (3) Species diversity, seasonal variety, and regenerative capacity of the vegetation on the permit area must be evaluated on the basis of species stocked and expected survival and reproduction rates.
- f. For shelterbelts, the following must be achieved during the growing season of the last year of the responsibility period:

- (1) Trees, shrubs, half-shrubs, root crowns, or root sprouts used in determining success of stocking must meet the following criteria:
 - (a) Be healthy;
 - (b) Be in place for at least two growing seasons; and
 - (c) If any replanting of woody plants took place during the responsibility period, the total number planted during the last six years of that period must be less than twenty percent of the total number of woody plants required. Any replanting must be by means of transplants to allow for adequate accounting of plant stocking; and
 - (d) Volunteer trees and shrubs of approved species will be considered at least two years of age and can be counted toward meeting success standards; however, volunteer trees must be at least thirty inches (76 centimeters) in height to be included in the count. Suckers on shrubby vegetation can be counted as volunteer plants when it is evident the shrub community is vigorous and expanding;
 - (2) Shelterbelt density and vigor must be equal to or greater than that of the approved standards; and
 - (3) Erosion must be adequately controlled.
- g. For fish and wildlife habitat, where the vegetation type is wetland, vegetation zones and dominant species must be equal to those of the approved standard during the growing season of the last year of the responsibility period. In addition, wetland permanence and water quality must meet approved standards.
- h. For fish and wildlife habitat, where the vegetation type is grassland, the following must be achieved during the growing season of the last year of the responsibility period:
- (1) Ground cover must be equal to or greater than that of the approved standard with ninety percent statistical confidence and must be adequate to control erosion.
 - (2) Species diversity, seasonal variety, and regenerative capacity of the vegetation must meet or exceed the approved standard.

- i. For previously mined areas that were not reclaimed to the requirements of this chapter, any reclamation requirements in effect when the areas were mined must be met. In addition, the ground cover must not be less than can be supported by the best available plant growth material in the reaffected area, nor less than the ground cover existing before redisturbance. Adequate measures must be in place to control erosion as approved by the commission. If lands affected by coal mining activities prior to January 1, 1970 are remined or otherwise redisturbed, the applicable standard must be met for the last two consecutive years of the minimum five year responsibility period that applies to remined lands. However, if the postmining land use for the remined area is woodlands, shelterbelts or fish and wildlife habitat, the applicable standard must be met for just the last year of the responsibility period.
 - j. For areas to be developed for water, residential, or industrial and commercial uses within two years after the completion of grading or soil replacement, the ground cover on these areas must not be less than required to control erosion.
 - k. For areas to be developed for recreation, woody plants must meet or exceed the stocking and plant establishment standards for woodlands or shelterbelts found in paragraph 1 of subdivision e or in subdivision f as applicable. In addition, ground cover must not be less than required to achieve the approved postmining land use.
 - l. If a reclaimed tract contains a mixture of prime and nonprime farmlands, the commission may approve a single yield standard for the entire tract based on the soil types that occurred on the prime and nonprime areas prior to mining. The operator must provide a detailed description and comparison of the soil mapping units, acreages, and yield calculations in the reclamation plan as required by subsection 8 of section 69-05.2-09-15. When a single yield standard is approved, the operator must demonstrate that the standard has been achieved for any three years starting no sooner than the sixth year of the responsibility period. If this option is approved, the operator must also meet the applicable requirements of section 69-05.2-26-05 for the entire tract.
5. Throughout the liability period the permittee must:
- a. Maintain any necessary fences and use proper management practices; and

- b. Conduct periodic measurements of vegetation, soils, and water prescribed or approved by the commission.

History: Effective August 1, 1980; amended effective June 1, 1983; May 1, 1990; May 1, 1992; January 1, 1993; June 1, 1997; May 1, 1999; May 1, 2001; March 1, 2004; April 1, 2007; _____.

General Authority: NDCC 38-14.1-03

Law Implemented: NDCC 38-14.1-24