

§ 816.105

(2) Blend into and complement the drainage pattern of the surrounding terrain.

(b) *Performance standards.* Where thin overburden occurs within the permit area, the permittee at a minimum shall:

(1) Use all spoil and other waste materials available from the entire permit area to attain the lowest practicable grade, but not more than the angle of repose; and

(2) Meet the requirements of §§ 816.102(a)(2) through (j) of this part.

[56 FR 65635, Dec. 17, 1991]

§ 816.105 Backfilling and grading: Thick overburden.

(a) *Definition.* Thick overburden means more than sufficient spoil and other waste materials available from the entire permit area to restore the disturbed area to its approximate original contour. More than sufficient spoil and other waste materials occur where the overburden thickness times the swell factor exceeds the combined thickness of the overburden and coal bed prior to removing the coal, so that after backfilling and grading the surface configuration of the reclaimed area would not:

(1) Closely resemble the surface configuration of the land prior to mining; or

(2) Blend into and complement the drainage pattern of the surrounding terrain.

(b) *Performance standards.* Where thick overburden occurs within the permit area, the permittee at a minimum shall:

(1) Restore the approximate original contour and then use the remaining spoil and other waste materials to attain the lowest practicable grade, but not more than the angle of repose;

(2) Meet the requirements of §§ 816.102(a)(2) through (j) of this part; and

(3) Dispose of any excess spoil in accordance with §§ 816.71 through 816.74 of this part.

[56 FR 65635, Dec. 17, 1991]

§ 816.106 Backfilling and grading: Previously mined areas.

(a) Reining operations on previously mined areas that contain a pre-

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existing highwall shall comply with the requirements of §§ 816.102 through 816.107 of this chapter, except as provided in this section.

(b) The requirements of § 816.102(a) (1) and (2) requiring the elimination of highwalls shall not apply to reining operations where the volume of all reasonably available spoil is demonstrated in writing to the regulatory authority to be insufficient to completely backfill the reaffected or enlarged highwall. The highwall shall be eliminated to the maximum extent technically practical in accordance with the following criteria:

(1) All spoil generated by the reining operation and any other reasonably available spoil shall be used to backfill the area. Reasonably available spoil in the immediate vicinity of the reining operation shall be included within the permit area.

(2) The backfill shall be graded to a slope which is compatible with the approved postmining land use and which provides adequate drainage and long-term stability.

(3) Any highwall remnant shall be stable and not pose a hazard to the public health and safety or to the environment. The operator shall demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the regulatory authority, that the highwall remnant is stable.

(4) Spoil placed on the outslope during previous mining operations shall not be disturbed if such disturbances will cause instability of the remaining spoil or otherwise increase the hazard to the public health and safety or to the environment.

[48 FR 41734, Sept. 16, 1983, as amended at 51 FR 41737, Nov. 18, 1986]

§ 816.107 Backfilling and grading: Steep slopes.

(a) Surface mining activities on steep slopes shall be conducted so as to meet the requirements of §§ 816.102-816.106, and the requirements of this section except where mining is conducted on flat or gently rolling terrain with an occasional steep slope through which the mining proceeds and leaves a plain or predominantly flat area or where operations are conducted in accordance with part 824 of this chapter.