

Environmental Protection Agency

§ 144.63

intangibles such as goodwill and rights to patents or royalties.

§ 144.62 Cost estimate for plugging and abandonment.

(a) The owner or operator must prepare a written estimate, in current dollars, of the cost of plugging the injection well in accordance with the plugging and abandonment plan as specified in §§ 144.28 and 144.51. The plugging and abandonment cost estimate must equal the cost of plugging and abandonment at the point in the facility's operating life when the extent and manner of its operation would make plugging and abandonment the most expensive, as indicated by its plugging and abandonment plan.

(b) The owner or operator must adjust the plugging and abandonment cost estimate for inflation within 30 days after each anniversary of the date on which the first plugging and abandonment cost estimate was prepared. The adjustment must be made as specified in paragraphs (b) (1) and (2) of this section, using an inflation factor derived from the annual Oil and Gas Field Equipment Cost Index. The inflation factor is the result of dividing the latest published annual Index by the Index for the previous year.

(1) The first adjustment is made by multiplying the plugging and abandonment cost estimate by the inflation factor. The result is the adjusted plugging and abandonment cost estimate.

(2) Subsequent adjustments are made by multiplying the latest adjusted plugging and abandonment cost estimate by the latest inflation factor.

(c) The owner or operator must revise the plugging and abandonment cost estimate whenever a change in the plugging and abandonment plan increases the cost of plugging and abandonment. The revised plugging and abandonment cost estimate must be adjusted for inflation as specified in § 144.62(b).

(d) The owner or operator must keep the following at the facility during the operating life of the facility: the latest plugging and abandonment cost estimate prepared in accordance with § 144.62 (a) and (c) and, when this estimate has been adjusted in accordance with § 144.62(b), the latest adjusted

plugging and abandonment cost estimate.

§ 144.63 Financial assurance for plugging and abandonment.

An owner or operator of each facility must establish financial assurance for the plugging and abandonment of each existing and new Class I hazardous waste injection well. He must choose from the options as specified in paragraphs (a) through (f) of this section.

(a) *Plugging and abandonment trust fund.* (1) An owner or operator may satisfy the requirements of this section by establishing a plugging and abandonment trust fund which conforms to the requirements of this paragraph and submitting an originally signed duplicate of the trust agreement to the Regional Administrator. An owner or operator of a Class I well injecting hazardous waste must submit the originally signed duplicate of the trust agreement to the Regional Administrator with the permit application or for approval to operate under rule. The trustee must be an entity which has the authority to act as a trustee and whose trust operations are regulated and examined by a Federal or State agency.

(2) The wording of the trust agreement must be identical to the wording specified in § 144.70(a)(1), and the trust agreement must be accompanied by a formal certification of acknowledgment (for example, see § 144.70(a)(2)). Schedule A of the trust agreement must be updated within 60 days after a change in the amount of the current plugging and abandonment cost estimate covered by the agreement.

(3) Payments into the trust fund must be made annually by the owner or operator over the term of the initial permit or over the remaining operating life of the injection well as estimated in the plugging and abandonment plan, whichever period is shorter; this period is hereafter referred to as the "pay-in period." The payments into the plugging and abandonment trust fund must be made as follows:

(i) For a new well, the first payment must be made before the initial injection of hazardous waste. A receipt from the trustee for this payment must be submitted by the owner or operator to