

207.14 Enforcement.

1. *a.* When on the basis of an inspection, the administrator determines that a condition or practice exists which creates an imminent danger to the health or safety of the public or can reasonably be expected to cause significant, imminent environmental harm to land, air, or water resources, the administrator shall immediately order a cessation of coal mining and reclamation operations to the extent necessary until the administrator determines that the condition, practice, or violation has been abated, or until the order is modified, vacated, or terminated by the division pursuant to procedures set out in this section.

b. If the administrator finds that the ordered cessation will not completely abate the imminent danger to health or safety of the public or the significant imminent environmental harm, the administrator shall require the operator to take whatever steps the administrator deems necessary to abate the imminent danger or the significant environmental harm.

2. *a.* When on the basis of an inspection, the administrator determines that any operator is in violation of any requirement of this chapter or permit condition, but the violation does not create an imminent danger to the health or safety of the public or cannot be reasonably expected to cause significant, imminent environmental harm, the administrator shall issue a notice to the operator fixing a reasonable time but not more than ninety days for the abatement of the violation and providing opportunity for public hearing.

b. If upon expiration of the time as fixed the administrator finds in writing that the violation has not been abated, the administrator, notwithstanding sections 17A.18 and 17A.18A, shall immediately order a cessation of coal mining and reclamation operations relating to the violation until the order is modified, vacated, or terminated by the administrator pursuant to procedures outlined in this section. In the order of cessation issued by the administrator under this subsection, the administrator shall include the steps necessary to abate the violation in the most expeditious manner possible.

3. When on the basis of an inspection the administrator determines that a pattern of violations of the requirements of this chapter or any permit conditions exists or has existed, and if the administrator also finds that the violations are willful or caused by the unwarranted failure of the operator to comply with any requirements of this chapter or any permit conditions, the administrator shall immediately issue an order to the operator to show cause as to why the permit should not be suspended or revoked and the bond or security forfeited, and shall provide opportunity for a hearing as a contested case pursuant to chapter 17A. Upon the operator's failure to show cause, the administrator shall immediately suspend or revoke the permit.

4. *a.* A permittee may request in writing an appeal to the committee of a decision made in a hearing under subsection 3 within thirty days of the decision. The committee shall review the record made in the contested case hearing, and may hear additional evidence upon a showing of good cause for failure to present the evidence in the hearing, or if evidence concerning events occurring after the hearing is deemed relevant to the proceeding. However, the committee shall not review a decision in a proceeding if the division seeks to collect a civil penalty pursuant to section 207.15, and those decisions are final agency actions subject to direct judicial review as provided in chapter 17A.

b. The contested case hearing shall be scheduled within thirty days of receipt of the request by the division. If the decision in the contested case is to revoke the permit, the permittee shall be given a specific period to complete reclamation, or the attorney general shall be requested to institute bond forfeiture proceedings.

5. In any administrative proceeding under this chapter or judicial review, the amount of all reasonable costs and expenses, including reasonable attorney fees incurred by a person in connection with the person's participation in the proceedings or judicial review, may be assessed against either party as the court in judicial review or the committee in administrative proceedings deems proper.

6. Notices and orders issued pursuant to this section shall set forth with reasonable specificity the nature of the violation and the remedial action required, the period of time established for abatement, and a reasonable description of the portion of the coal mining and reclamation operation to which the notice or order applies. Each notice or order issued under this section shall be given promptly to the operator or an agent and all notices and

orders shall be in writing and signed. A notice or order issued pursuant to this section may be modified, vacated, or terminated by the administrator. Any notice or order issued pursuant to this section which requires cessation of mining by the operator expires within thirty days of actual notice to the operator unless a public hearing is held at or near the site so that any viewings of the site can be conducted during the course of the hearing.

7. a. A permittee issued a notice or order under this section or any person having an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the notice or order or by its modification, vacation, or termination may apply to the committee for review within thirty days of receipt of the notice or order or within thirty days of its modification, vacation, or termination. The review shall be treated as a contested case under chapter 17A.

b. Pending completion of any investigation or hearings required by this section, the applicant may file with the division a written request that the administrator grant temporary relief from any notice or order issued under this section together with a detailed statement giving reasons for granting such relief.

c. The administrator shall issue an order or decision granting or denying the request for relief within five days of its receipt. The administrator may grant such relief under such conditions as the administrator may prescribe if all of the following occur:

(1) A hearing has been held in the locality of the permit area in which all parties were given an opportunity to be heard. The hearing need not be held as a contested case under chapter 17A.

(2) The applicant shows that there is substantial likelihood that the findings of the committee will be favorable to the applicant.

(3) Such relief will not adversely affect the health or safety of the public or cause significant, imminent environmental harm to land, air, or water resources.

8. At the request of the division, the attorney general shall institute any legal proceedings, including an action for an injunction or a temporary injunction necessary to enforce the penalty provisions of this chapter or to obtain compliance with this chapter. Injunctive relief may be requested to enforce a cessation order issued by the administrator pending a hearing pursuant to subsection 4.

9. When on the basis of an inspection, or other information available to the division, the administrator has reasonable cause to believe that the operator is unable to complete reclamation of all or a portion of the permit area as required by law, the administrator shall issue an order to the operator to show cause as to why all or a portion of the performance bond required by section 207.10 should not be revoked.

[C81, §83.14; 82 Acts, ch 1119, §1, 2]

85 Acts, ch 140, §2 - 4

C93, §207.14

98 Acts, ch 1202, §35, 46; 2009 Acts, ch 41, §219

Referred to in §207.10, 207.15