

CHAPTER 208

MINES

Referred to in §159.5, 159.6, 161A.4, 189.16, 190.1

This chapter not enacted as a part of this title;
transferred from chapter 83A in Code 1993

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208.1 Policy.

It is the policy of this state to provide for the reclamation and conservation of land affected by the mining of gypsum, clay, stone, sand, gravel, or other ores or mineral solids, except coal, and thereby to preserve natural resources, protect and perpetuate the taxable value of property, and protect and promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people of this state.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.1]

85 Acts, ch 137, §1

C93, §208.1

96 Acts, ch 1043, §1

208.2 Definitions.

When used in [this chapter](#), unless the context otherwise requires:

1. “*Administrator*” means the administrator of the division or a designee.
2. “*Affected land*” means the area of land from which overburden has been removed or upon which overburden has been deposited or land which has otherwise been disturbed, changed, influenced, or altered in any way in the course of mining, including processing and stockpile areas but not including roads.
3. “*Division*” means the division of soil conservation and water quality created within the department of agriculture and land stewardship pursuant to [section 159.5](#).
4. “*Exploration*” means the mining of limited amounts of any mineral to determine the location, quantity, or quality of the mineral deposit.
5. “*Highwall*” means the unexcavated face of exposed overburden and mineral in a surface mine.
6. “*Mine*” or “*mine site*” means a site where mining is being conducted or has been conducted in the past.
7. “*Mineral*” means gypsum, clay, stone, sand, gravel, or other ores or mineral solids, except coal.
8. “*Mining*” means the excavation of gypsum, clay, stone, sand, gravel, or other ores or mineral solids, except coal, for sale or for processing or consumption in the regular operation of a business and shall include surface mining and underground mining.
9. “*Mining operation*” means activities conducted by an operator on a mine site relative

to the excavation of minerals and shall include disturbing overburden, excavation, and processing of minerals, stockpiling and removal of minerals from a site, and all reclamation activities conducted on a mine site.

10. “*Operator*” means any person, firm, partnership, corporation, or political subdivision engaged in and controlling a mining operation.

11. “*Overburden*” means all of the earth and other materials which lie above natural mineral deposits and includes all earth and other materials disturbed from their natural state in the process of mining.

12. “*Pit floor*” or “*quarry floor*” means the lower limit of a surface excavation to extract minerals.

13. “*Political subdivision*” means any county, district, city, or other public agency within the state of Iowa.

14. “*Reclamation*” means the process of restoring disturbed lands to the premined uses of the lands or other productive uses.

15. “*Surface mining*” means mining by removing the overburden lying above the natural deposits and excavating directly from the natural deposits exposed, or by excavating directly from deposits lying exposed in their natural state and shall include dredge operations conducted in or on natural waterways or artificially created waterways within the state.

16. “*Topsoil*” means the natural medium located at the land surface with favorable characteristics for the growth of vegetation.

17. “*Underground mining*” means mining by digging or constructing access tunnels, adits, ramps, or shafts and excavating directly from the natural mineral deposits exposed.

[C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1244; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, §82.27; C71, 73, §82.27, 83A.2; C75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.2]

85 Acts, ch 137, §2 – 5; 86 Acts, ch 1245, §602, 2050

C93, §208.2

96 Acts, ch 1043, §2; 2015 Acts, ch 103, §41; 2017 Acts, ch 159, §46; 2024 Acts, ch 1170, §35

Referred to in §208.7

Subsection 3 stricken and former subsections 4 – 18 renumbered as 3 – 17

208.3 through 208.6 Reserved.

208.7 Mining license — fees and expiration.

An operator shall not engage in mining as defined by [section 208.2](#) without first obtaining a license from the division. A license shall be issued and renewed upon approval by the division following the submission of a completed application by the operator. An application shall be submitted on a form provided by the division and shall be accompanied by a license fee of fifty dollars. Each applicant shall be required to furnish on the form information necessary to identify the applicant. The initial license shall expire on December 31 of the year of issue. An initial license shall be renewed by the division as required by the division. The renewed license shall expire the last day of the second December following the date of issue. The division shall renew a license upon approving an application submitted within thirty days prior to the expiration date. The application for a renewed license must be accompanied by a fee of twenty dollars. A political subdivision shall not be required to pay a license fee.

[C39, §1242.5; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, §82.22; C71, 73, §82.22, 83A.7; C75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.7] C93, §208.7

96 Acts, ch 1043, §3; 2017 Acts, ch 159, §47; 2018 Acts, ch 1026, §65

Referred to in §208.14

208.8 Suspension, revocation, or refusal to issue license.

1. The division may, for repeated or willful violation of any of the provisions of [this chapter](#), initiate an action to suspend, revoke, or refuse to issue a mining license.

2. The division shall, by certified mail or personal service, serve on the operator notice in writing of the charges and grounds upon which the license is to be suspended, revoked, or will not be issued. The notice shall include the time and the place at which a hearing shall be held before the division to determine whether to suspend, revoke, or refuse to issue the

license. The hearing shall be not less than fifteen nor more than thirty days after the mailing or service of the notice.

3. An operator whose license the division proposes to suspend, revoke, or refuse to issue has the right to counsel and may produce witnesses and present statements, documents, and other information in the operator's behalf at the hearing.

4. If after full investigation and hearing the operator is found to have willfully or repeatedly violated any of the provisions of [this chapter](#), the division may affirm or modify the proposed suspension, revocation, or refusal to issue the license.

5. When the division finds that a license should be suspended or revoked or should not be issued, the division shall so notify the operator in writing by certified mail or by personal service.

a. The suspension or revocation of a license shall become effective thirty days after notice to the operator.

b. If the license or renewal fee has been paid and the division finds that the license should not be issued, then the license shall expire thirty days after notice to the operator.

6. An action by the division to affirm or modify the proposed suspension, revocation, or refusal to issue a license constitutes a final agency action for purposes of judicial review pursuant to [section 208.11](#) and [chapter 17A](#).

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.8]

[85 Acts, ch 137, §8](#)

C93, §208.8

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §4; 2024 Acts, ch 1170, §36](#)

Subsections 2, 4, 5, and 6 amended

208.9 Registering mine site.

1. At least seven days before beginning mining or removal of overburden at a mine site not previously registered, an operator engaging, or preparing to engage, in mining in this state shall register the mine site with the division. Application for registration shall be made upon a form provided by the division and shall be accompanied by a bond or security as provided by [section 208.14](#). A registration renewal shall be filed annually. Application for renewal of registration shall be on a form provided by the division. The registration and registration cancellation fees shall be established by the division in an amount not to exceed the cost of administering the provisions of [this chapter](#). The application shall include a description of the tract or tracts of land where the site is located and the estimated number of acres at the site to be affected by the mine. The description shall include the section, township, range, and county in which the land is located and shall otherwise describe the land with sufficient certainty to determine the location and to distinguish the land to be registered from other lands. The application shall include a statement explaining the authority of the applicant's legal right to operate a mine on the land.

2. A mine site registered pursuant to [this chapter](#) shall have a clearly visible sign which identifies the mining operation. Failure to post and maintain a sign as required by [this subsection](#), within thirty days after notice from the division, invalidates the registration.

3. The division shall automatically invalidate all registrations of an operator who fails to renew the operator's mining license within a time period set by the division, who has been denied license renewal by the division, or whose license has been suspended or revoked by the division.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.9]

[85 Acts, ch 137, §9](#)

C93, §208.9

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §5; 2024 Acts, ch 1170, §37](#)

Referred to in [§208.15](#), [208.16](#)

Subsection 3 amended

208.10 Violation — enforcement.

1. The administrator may issue an order directing the operator to desist in an activity or practice which constitutes a violation of any provision of [this chapter](#) or any rules adopted by the division, or to take such corrective action as may be necessary to ensure that the violation

will cease. If corrective measures sought by the division are not commenced within the time period designated in the order, the division may refer the violation to the attorney general for further action.

2. The operator may contest an order issued under [this section](#) through contested case proceedings pursuant to [chapter 17A](#) by filing with the administrator a notice of appeal within thirty days of receipt of the order for review by the division.

3. At the request of the division, the attorney general shall institute any legal proceedings, including an action for a civil penalty, injunction, or temporary injunction, necessary to enforce the provisions of [this chapter](#) or to obtain compliance with [this chapter](#). Action by the attorney general may be taken in lieu of or in conjunction with any administrative action by the division.

4. Falsification of information required to be submitted under [this chapter](#) is a violation of [this chapter](#).

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.10]

C93, §208.10

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §6](#)

Referred to in [§208.10A](#)

208.10A Penalties.

1. Any person who violates an order issued pursuant to [section 208.10](#) shall be subject to an administrative penalty determined by the division not to exceed five thousand dollars per violation.

a. The division shall establish, by rule, a schedule or range of administrative penalties. The schedule shall provide procedures and criteria for the assessment of these penalties.

b. Administrative penalties may be assessed in lieu of or in conjunction with any action initiated by the attorney general on behalf of the division.

c. All penalties shall be paid within thirty days of the date that the order assessing the penalty becomes final. An operator who fails to pay an administrative penalty assessed by a final order of the division shall pay, in addition, interest at the rate of one and one-half percent of the unpaid balance of the assessed penalty for each month or part of a month that the penalty remains unpaid.

d. The attorney general shall, at the request of the division, institute proceedings to recover all penalties assessed.

2. If any person violates a provision of [this chapter](#), or any rule or order adopted by the division pursuant to [this chapter](#), the division may notify the attorney general who shall institute a civil action in district court for injunctive relief and for the assessment of a civil penalty not to exceed ten thousand dollars per violation.

3. Penalties, bond reversions, and bond forfeitures collected under the provisions of [this chapter](#) or any rule adopted by the division pursuant to [this chapter](#) shall be deposited in an interest-bearing account and may be used for the cost and administrative expenses of reclamation or rehabilitation activities for any mine site as deemed necessary and appropriate by the division.

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §7](#)

208.11 Judicial review.

Judicial review of the action of the division may be sought in accordance with the terms of the Iowa administrative procedure Act, [chapter 17A](#).

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.11]

C93, §208.11

[2003 Acts, ch 44, §114](#); [2024 Acts, ch 1170, §38](#)

Referred to in [§208.8](#)

Section amended

208.12 Reserved.

208.13 Registering surface mining site — sign at entrance — penalty. Repealed by [96 Acts, ch 1043, §20](#).

208.14 Bond.

The application for registration shall be accompanied by a bond or security as required under [section 208.23](#) or [208.24](#). After ascertaining that the applicant is licensed under [section 208.7](#) and is not in violation of [this chapter](#) with respect to any mine site previously registered with the division, the division shall register the mine site and shall issue the applicant written authorization to operate a mine.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.14]

[85 Acts, ch 137, §13](#)

C93, §208.14

Referred to in [§208.9](#), [208.16](#), [208.24](#)

208.15 Amendment or cancellation.

An operator may at any time apply for amendment or cancellation of registration of any site. The application for amendment or cancellation of registration shall be submitted by the operator on a form provided by the division and shall identify as required under [section 208.9](#) the tract or tracts of land to be added to or removed from registration. If the application is for an increase in the area of a registered site, the application shall be processed in the same manner as an application for original registration. If the application is to cancel registration of any or all of the unmined part of a site, the division shall after ascertaining that no overburden has been disturbed or deposited on the land order release of the bond or the security posted on the land being removed from registration and cancel or amend the operator's written authorization to conduct mining on the site. Fees for amendment or cancellation of registration shall be determined as provided in [section 208.9](#). No land where overburden has been disturbed or deposited shall be removed from registration or released from bond or security under [this section](#).

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.15]

C93, §208.15

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §8](#)

Referred to in [§208.23](#), [208.24](#)

208.16 Transfer to new operator.

1. If control of a mine site registered pursuant to [section 208.9](#) is acquired by an operator other than the operator holding authorization to conduct mining on the site, the new operator shall within thirty days apply for registration of the site. The application shall be made and processed as provided under [sections 208.9](#) and [208.14](#). The former operator's bond or security shall not be released until the new operator's bond or security has been accepted by the division.

2. The division may establish procedures for transferring the responsibility for reclamation of a mine site to a state agency or political subdivision, or to a private entity, which intends to use the site for other purposes. The division, with agreement from the receiving agency or subdivision, or from a private entity, to complete adequate reclamation, may approve the transfer of responsibility, release the bond or security, and terminate or amend the operator's authorization to conduct mining on the site.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.16]

C93, §208.16

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §9](#); [2004 Acts, ch 1175, §228](#)

Referred to in [§208.17](#)

208.17 Reclamation requirements.

1. An operator authorized under [this chapter](#) to operate a mine, after completion of mining operations and within the time specified in [section 208.19](#), shall:

a. Grade affected lands to slopes having a maximum of one foot vertical rise for each four feet of horizontal distance. Where the original topography of the affected land was steeper than one foot of vertical rise for each four feet of horizontal distance, the affected lands may be graded to blend with the surrounding terrain. However, water impoundments, pit or quarry floors, and highwalls are not subject to the requirements of this paragraph.

b. Stabilize and revegetate affected lands, except for water impoundments and pit or

quarry floors as approved by the division before the release of the bond as provided in [section 208.19](#).

c. Properly dispose of all mine-related debris, junk, waste materials, old equipment, and other materials of similar or like nature, within the registration boundaries of the site.

2. Notwithstanding [subsection 1](#), overburden piles where deposition has not occurred for a period of twelve months shall be stabilized and revegetated.

3. Topsoil that is a part of overburden shall not be destroyed or buried in the process of mining.

4. The division may grant a variance from the requirements of [subsections 1 and 2](#).

5. A bond or security posted under [this chapter](#) to assure reclamation of affected lands shall not be released until all of the reclamation work required by [this section](#) has been performed in accordance with [this chapter](#) and division rules, except when a replacement bond or security is posted by a new operator or responsibility is transferred under [section 208.16](#).

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.17]

[85 Acts, ch 137, §14](#)

C93, §208.17

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §10](#)

Referred to in [§208.19, 208.23, 208.28](#)

208.18 Periodic reports.

An operator shall file with the division a periodic report for each mine site under registration.

1. The report shall make reference to the most recent registration of the mine site and shall show:

a. The location and extent of all surface land area on the mine site affected by mining during the period covered by the report.

b. The extent to which removal of mineral products from all or any part of the affected lands has been completed.

2. The report shall be filed not later than twelve months after original registration of the site and prior to the expiration of each subsequent twelve-month period. A report shall also be filed within thirty days after completion of all mining operations at the site regardless of the date of the last preceding report. Forms for the filing of periodic reports required by [this section](#) shall be provided by the division.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.18]

[85 Acts, ch 137, §15](#)

C93, §208.18

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §11](#)

Referred to in [§208.19](#)

208.19 Reclamation schedule.

1. An operator of a mine shall reclaim affected lands according to a schedule established by the division, but within a period not to exceed three years, after the filing of a report required under [section 208.18](#) indicating the mining of any part of a site has been completed.

2. For certain postmining land uses, such as a sanitary landfill, the division may allow an extended reclamation period.

3. An operator, upon completion of any reclamation work required by [section 208.17](#), shall apply to the division in writing for approval of the work. The division shall within a reasonable time determined by divisional rule inspect the completed reclamation work. Upon determination by the division that the operator has satisfactorily completed all required reclamation work on the land included in the application, the division shall release the bond or security on the reclaimed land, shall remove the land from registration, and shall terminate or amend as necessary the operator's authorization to conduct mining on the site.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.19]

[85 Acts, ch 137, §16; 87 Acts, ch 115, §11](#)

C93, §208.19

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §12](#); [2017 Acts, ch 54, §76](#)

Referred to in [§208.17](#), [208.20](#), [208.24](#)

208.20 Extension of time.

The time for completion of reclamation work may be extended upon presentation by the operator of evidence satisfactory to the division that reclamation of affected land cannot be completed within the time specified by [section 208.19](#).

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.20]

[85 Acts, ch 137, §17](#)

C93, §208.20

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §13](#)

208.21 Political subdivision engaged in mining.

Any political subdivision of the state of Iowa which engages or intends to engage in mining shall meet all requirements of [this chapter](#) except the subdivision shall not be required to post bond or security on registered land and shall not be required to pay licensing fees.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.21]

C93, §208.21

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §14](#)

208.22 Hearing on violation. Repealed by [96 Acts, ch 1043, §20](#).

208.23 Form of bond.

1. A bond filed with the division by an operator pursuant to [this chapter](#) shall be in a form prescribed by the division, payable to the state of Iowa, and conditioned upon faithful performance by the operator of all requirements of [this chapter](#) and all rules adopted by the division pursuant to [this chapter](#). The bond shall be signed by the operator as principal and by a corporate surety licensed to do business in Iowa as surety. In lieu of a bond, the operator may deposit cash or certificates of deposit with the division on the same conditions as prescribed by [this section](#) for filing of bonds. The amount of the bond required to be filed with an application for registration of a mining site, or to increase the area of a site previously registered, shall be equal to the cost of reclaiming the site as required under [section 208.17](#) and estimated by the division.

2. The estimated cost of reclamation of each individual site shall be determined by the division on the basis of the requirements of [this chapter](#) and other relevant factors including, but not limited to, topography of the site, mining methods being employed, depth and composition of overburden, depth of the mineral deposit being mined, and cost of administration. The division may require an operator to furnish information necessary to estimate the cost of reclaiming the site. The amount of the bond may be increased or reduced from time to time as determined necessary and appropriate by the division or in accordance with [section 208.15](#).

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.23]

[85 Acts, ch 137, §18](#)

C93, §208.23

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §15](#)

Referred to in [§208.14](#), [208.24](#)

208.24 Single bond for multiple sites.

An operator who registers with the division two or more mine sites may elect, at the time the second or a subsequent site is registered, to post a single bond in lieu of separate bonds on each site. A single bond so posted shall be in an amount equal to the estimated cost of reclaiming all sites the operator has registered, determined as provided in [section 208.23](#). The penalty of a single bond on two or more mine sites may be increased or decreased from time to time in accordance with [sections 208.14](#), [208.15](#), and [208.19](#). When an operator elects to

post a single bond in lieu of separate bonds previously posted on individual sites, the separate bonds shall not be released until the new bond has been accepted by the division.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.24]

[85 Acts, ch 137, §19](#)

C93, §208.24

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §16](#)

Referred to in [§208.14](#)

208.25 Cancellation of bond.

No bond filed with the division by an operator pursuant to [this chapter](#) may be canceled by the surety without at least ninety days' notice to the division. If the license to do business in Iowa of any surety of a bond filed with the division is suspended or revoked, the operator, within thirty days after receiving notice thereof from the division, shall substitute for the surety a corporate surety licensed to do business in Iowa. Upon failure of the operator to make substitution of surety as herein provided, the division shall have the right to suspend the operator's authorization to conduct mining on the site covered by the bond until substitution has been made. The commissioner of insurance shall notify the division whenever the license of any surety to do business in Iowa is suspended or revoked.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.25]

C93, §208.25

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §17](#)

208.26 Rules — inspection of site.

The division may adopt rules to implement the provisions of [this chapter](#). The administrator or the administrator's designee may enter at all times upon any mine site or suspected mine site for the purpose of determining whether the operator is or has been complying with the provisions of [this chapter](#). All operators shall cooperate with the division in seeking methods of operation which will cause minimum disruption to the land and property adjoining a mining operation.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.26]

C93, §208.26

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §18](#)

208.27 Hearing on violations. Repealed by 96 Acts, ch 1043, §20.

208.28 Forfeiture of bond — licensure restrictions.

1. The attorney general, upon request of the division, shall institute proceedings for forfeiture of the bond posted by an operator to guarantee reclamation of a site where the operator is in violation of any of the provisions of [this chapter](#) or any rule adopted by the division pursuant to [this chapter](#). The division shall have the power to reclaim as required by [section 208.17](#) any mined land with respect to which a bond has been forfeited, using the proceeds of the forfeiture to pay for the necessary reclamation work and associated administrative costs.

2. If the proceeds from bond forfeiture proceedings are insufficient to fully satisfy the estimated cost of reclaiming disturbed lands as required under [section 208.17](#) and division rules, the operator shall be liable for remaining costs. The division may complete, or authorize completion of, the necessary reclamation and may authorize the attorney general to bring a civil action to recover from the operator all actual or estimated costs of reclamation in excess of the amount forfeited or require the operator to complete reclamation.

3. If the amount of bond forfeited exceeds the amount necessary to complete reclamation, the unused funds shall be returned to the operator or the surety, as appropriate.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §83A.28]

[85 Acts, ch 137, §20](#)

C93, §208.28

[96 Acts, ch 1043, §19](#)

208.29 and 208.30 Repealed by 96 Acts, ch 1043, §20.