

567—120.13(455B,455D) Financial assurance requirements for landfarms. The holder of a sanitary disposal project permit for a landfarm must obtain and submit a financial assurance instrument to the department in accordance with this rule. The financial assurance instrument shall provide monetary funds for the purpose of conducting closure activities at the landfarm plot(s) due to the permit holder's failure to properly close the site as required in accordance with rule 567—120.12(455B) within 30 days of permit suspension, termination, revocation, or expiration.

120.13(1) *No permit without financial assurance.* The department shall not issue or renew a permit to an owner or operator of a landfarm until a financial assurance instrument has been submitted to and approved by the department.

120.13(2) *Proof of compliance.* Proof of the establishment of the financial assurance instrument and compliance with this rule, including a current closure cost estimate, shall be submitted at the time of application for a permit for a landfarm applicator permit. The owner or operator must provide continuous coverage for closure and submit proof of compliance, including an updated closure cost estimate, with each permit renewal thereafter until released from this requirement by the department.

120.13(3) *Financial assurance amounts required.* The estimate submitted to the department must be certified by a professional engineer and account for at least the following factors determined by the department to be minimal necessary costs for closure pursuant to rule 567—120.12(455B):

a. Third-party costs to conduct soil sampling and properly clean all equipment and storage areas at the landfarm plot(s).

b. If PCS is temporarily stored on site prior to incorporation, then this estimate shall include third-party labor and transportation costs and total tip fees to properly dispose of all PCS equal to the maximum storage capacity on site.

120.13(4) *Acceptable financial assurance instruments.* The financial assurance instrument shall be established in an amount equal to the cost estimate prepared in accordance with subrule 120.13(3) and shall not be canceled, revoked, disbursed, released, or allowed to terminate without the approval of the department. Financial assurance may be provided by cash in the form of a secured trust fund or local government dedicated fund, surety bond, letter of credit, or corporate or local government guarantee as follows:

a. Secured trust fund. The owner or operator of a landfarm or entity serving as a guarantor may demonstrate financial assurance for closure by establishing a secured trust fund that conforms to the requirements of this paragraph.

(1) 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. The fund shall be restricted for the sole purpose of funding closure activities at the landfarm sites, and a copy of the trust agreement must be submitted to the department and placed in the permit holder's official files.

(2) A secured trust fund shall name the department of natural resources as the entity authorized to draw funds from the trust, subject to proper notification to the trust officer of failure by the permittee to properly close the site within 30 days of permit suspension, termination, revocation, or expiration.

(3) Moneys in the fund shall not be assigned for the benefit of creditors with the exception of the state.

(4) Moneys in the fund shall not be used to pay any final judgment against a permit holder arising out of the ownership or operation of the site during its active life or after closure.

(5) The owner or operator or another person authorized to conduct closure activities may request reimbursement from the trustee for closure expenditures as they are incurred. Requests for reimbursement shall be granted by the trustee only if sufficient funds are remaining in the trust fund to cover the remaining costs of closure and if documentation of the justification for reimbursement has been submitted to the department for prior approval.

(6) If the balance of the trust fund exceeds the current cost estimate for closure at any time, the owner or operator may request withdrawal of the excess funds from the trustee so long as the withdrawal does not cause the balance to be reduced below the amount of the current cost estimate.

b. Local government dedicated fund. The owner or operator of a publicly owned entity permitted to landfarm PCS or a local government serving as a guarantor may demonstrate financial assurance for closure by establishing a dedicated fund that conforms to the requirements of this paragraph.

(1) The fund shall be dedicated by state constitutional provision or local government statute, charter, ordinance, resolution or order as a restricted fund to pay for closure costs arising from the operation of the landfarm site(s).

(2) A copy of the document establishing the dedicated fund must be submitted to the department and placed in the permit holder's official files.

(3) If the balance of the dedicated fund exceeds the current cost estimate for closure at any time, the owner or operator may withdraw excess funds so long as the withdrawal does not cause the balance to be reduced below the amount of the current cost estimate.

c. Surety bond. A surety bond must be written by a company authorized by the commissioner of insurance to do business in the state. The surety bond shall comply with the following:

(1) The bond shall be in a form approved by the commissioner of insurance and shall be payable to the department of natural resources.

(2) The bond shall be specific to a particular landfarm owner or operator for the purpose of funding closure in accordance with rule 567—120.12(455B) and removing any stockpiled PCS that may remain at the site(s) due to the owner's or operator's failure to properly close the site within 30 days of permit suspension, termination, revocation, or expiration.

(3) The owner or operator shall provide the department with a statement from the surety with each permit application renewal, noting that the bond is paid and current for the permit period for which the owner or operator has applied for renewal.

d. Letter of credit. The issuing institution must be an entity which has the authority to issue letters of credit and whose letter-of-credit operations are regulated and examined by a federal or state agency.

(1) The owner or operator must submit to the department a copy of the letter of credit and place a copy in the permit holder's official files.

(2) A letter from the owner or operator referring to the letter of credit by number, issuing institution, and date, and providing the name and address of the permit holder and the amount of funds assured, must be included with the letter of credit submitted to the department and placed in the permit holder's files.

(3) The letter of credit must be irrevocable and must be issued for a period of at least one year. The letter of credit must provide that the expiration date will be automatically extended for a period of at least one year unless the issuing institution has canceled the letter of credit by sending notice of cancellation by certified mail to the owner or operator and to the department 90 days in advance of cancellation. When such notice is provided, the owner or operator shall, within 60 days, provide to the department adequate proof of alternative financial assurance, notice of withdrawal of cancellation, or proof of a deposit of a sum equal to the amount of the letter of credit into a secured trust fund that meets the requirements of paragraph 120.13(4) "a." If the owner or operator has not complied with this subrule within the 60-day time period, the issuer of the letter of credit shall deposit a sum equal to the amount of the letter of credit into the secured trust fund established by the owner or operator. The provision of funds by the issuer of the letter of credit shall be considered an issuance of a loan to the owner or operator, and the terms of that loan shall be governed by the letter of credit or subsequent agreement between those parties. The state shall not be considered a party to this credit transaction.

e. Corporate guarantee. An owner or operator may meet the requirements of this rule by obtaining a written guarantee. The guarantor must be the direct or higher-tier parent corporation of the owner or operator, an owner or operator whose parent corporation is also the parent corporation of the owner or operator, or an owner or operator with a "substantial business relationship" with the owner or operator.

(1) The terms of the written guarantee must provide that within 30 days of the owner's or operator's failure to perform closure of a landfarm site(s) covered by the guarantee, the guarantor will:

1. Perform closure or pay a third party to perform closure as required (performance guarantee);
2. Establish a fully funded secured trust fund as specified in paragraph 120.13(4) "a" in the name of the owner or operator (payment guarantee); or

3. Establish an alternative financial assurance instrument in the name of the owner or operator as required by this rule.

(2) The guarantor must satisfy one of the following three conditions:

1. A current rating for its senior unsubordinated debt of AAA, AA, A, or BBB as issued by Standard & Poor's or Aaa, Aa, A, or Baa as issued by Moody's; or

2. A ratio of less than 1.5 comparing total liabilities to net worth; or

3. A ratio of greater than 0.10 comparing the sum of net income plus depreciation, depletion and amortization, minus \$10 million, to total liabilities.

(3) The tangible net worth of the guarantor must be greater than the sum of the current closure cost estimate and any other environmental obligations, including other financial assurance guarantees.

(4) The guarantor must have assets amounting to at least the sum of the current closure cost estimate and any other environmental obligations, including other financial assurance guarantees.

(5) Record-keeping and reporting requirements. The guarantor must submit the following records to the department and place a copy in the permit holder's official files:

1. A copy of the written guarantee between the owner or operator and the guarantor.

2. A letter signed by a certified public accountant and based upon a certified audit that:

- Lists all the current cost estimates covered by a guarantee including, but not limited to, cost estimates required by subrule 120.13(3); cost estimates required for municipal solid waste management facilities pursuant to 40 CFR Part 258; cost estimates required for UIC facilities under 40 CFR Part 144, if applicable; cost estimates required for petroleum underground storage tank facilities under 40 CFR Part 280, if applicable; cost estimates required for PCB storage facilities under 40 CFR Part 761, if applicable; and cost estimates required for hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facilities under 40 CFR Parts 264 and 265, if applicable; and

- Provides evidence demonstrating that the guarantor meets the conditions of subparagraphs 120.13(4) "e"(2), (3) and (4).

3. A copy of the independent certified public accountant's unqualified opinion of the guarantor's financial statements for the latest completed fiscal year. In order for the guarantor to be eligible to use the guarantee, the guarantor's financial statements must receive an unqualified opinion from the independent certified public accountant. An adverse opinion or disclaimer of opinion shall be cause for disallowance of this instrument. A qualified opinion related to the demonstration of financial assurance may, at the discretion of the department, be cause for disallowance. If the department does not allow use of the corporate guarantee, the owner or operator must provide alternative financial assurance that meets the requirements of this rule.

f. Local government guarantee. An owner or operator may demonstrate financial assurance for closure by obtaining a written guarantee provided by a local government or jointly provided by the members of an agency established pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 28E.

(1) The terms of the written guarantee must provide that within 30 days of the owner's or operator's failure to perform closure of a landfarm site(s) covered by the guarantee, the guarantor will:

1. Perform closure or pay a third party to perform closure as required (performance guarantee);

2. Establish a fully funded secured trust fund as specified in paragraph 120.13(4) "a" in the name of the owner or operator (payment guarantee); or

3. Establish an alternative financial assurance instrument in the name of the owner or operator as required by this rule.

(2) The guarantor must satisfy one of the following requirements:

1. If the guarantor has outstanding, rated, general obligation bonds that are not secured by insurance, a letter of credit, or other collateral or guarantee, the guarantor must have a current rating of Aaa, Aa, A, or Baa, as issued by Moody's, or AAA, AA, A, or BBB, as issued by Standard & Poor's, on all such general obligation bonds; or

2. The guarantor must satisfy each of the following financial ratios based on the guarantor's most recent audited annual financial statement: a ratio of cash plus marketable securities to total expenditures greater than or equal to 0.05, and a ratio of annual debt service to total expenditures less than or equal to 0.20.

(3) The guarantor must prepare its financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles or other comprehensive basis of accounting and must have its financial statements audited by an independent certified public accountant or the office of the auditor of the state of Iowa. The financial statement shall be in the form prescribed by the office of the auditor of the state of Iowa.

(4) A guarantor is not eligible to assure its obligations if:

1. The guarantor is currently in default on any outstanding general obligation bonds; or
 2. The guarantor has any outstanding general obligation bonds rated lower than Baa as issued by Moody's or BBB as issued by Standard & Poor's; or

3. The guarantor operated at a deficit equal to 5 percent or more of total annual revenue in each of the past two fiscal years; or

4. The guarantor receives an adverse opinion or disclaimer of opinion from the independent certified public accountant or office of the auditor of the state of Iowa auditing its financial statement. A qualified opinion that is related to the demonstration of financial assurance may, at the discretion of the department, be cause for disallowance of this mechanism; or

5. The closure costs to be assured are greater than 43 percent of the guarantor's total annual revenue.

(5) The local government guarantor must include disclosure of the closure costs assured through the guarantee in its next annual audit report prior to the initial application of PCS at the landfarm site(s) or prior to cancellation of an alternative financial assurance instrument, whichever is later. For the first year the guarantee is used to assure costs at a particular site(s), the reference may instead be placed in the guarantor's official files until issuance of the next available annual audit report if timing does not permit the reference to be incorporated into the most recently issued annual audit report or budget. For closure costs, conformance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement 18 ensures compliance with this public notice component.

(6) The local government owner or operator must submit to the department the following items:

1. A copy of the written guarantee between the owner or operator and the local government serving as guarantor for the closure costs at the landfarm site(s).

2. A copy of the guarantor's most recent annual financial audit report indicating compliance with the financial ratios required by numbered paragraph 120.13(4) "f"(2)"2," if applicable, and the requirements of subparagraphs 120.13(4) "f"(3) and (4).

3. A letter signed by the local government's chief financial officer that lists all the current cost estimates covered by the guarantor, as described in subrule 120.13(3); and that provides evidence and certifies that the local government meets the conditions of subparagraphs 120.13(4) "f"(2), (3), (4) and (5).

120.13(5) *Financial assurance cancellation and permit suspension.*

a. A financial assurance instrument may be terminated by the owner or operator only if the owner or operator substitutes alternate financial assurance prior to cancellation, as specified in this rule, or if the owner or operator is no longer required to demonstrate financial responsibility in accordance with this rule.

b. A financial assurance instrument shall be continuous in nature until canceled by the financial assurance provider or until the department gives written notification to the owner, operator, and financial assurance provider that the covered site has been properly closed. The financial assurance provider shall give at least 90 days' notice in writing to the owner or operator and the department in the event of any intent to cancel the instrument.

c. Within 60 days of receipt of a written notice of cancellation of financial assurance by the financial assurance provider, the owner or operator must provide the department an alternative financial assurance instrument. If a means of continued financial assurance is not provided within that 60 days, the department shall suspend the permit.

d. The owner or operator shall perform proper closure within 30 days of the permit suspension. For the purpose of this rule, "proper closure" means completion of all items pursuant to rule 567—120.12(455B) and subrule 120.13(3).

e. If the owner or operator does not properly close the site within the 30-day period allowed, the department shall file a claim with the financial assurance instrument provider to collect the amount of funds necessary to properly close the site.

f. An owner or operator who elects to terminate a permitted activity, whose renewal application has been denied, or whose permit has been suspended or revoked for cause must submit within 30 days of the termination of the permit a schedule for completing proper closure of the terminated activity. Closure completion cannot exceed 60 days from the date of termination of the permit.

g. The director may also request payment from any financial assurance provider for the purpose of completing closure when the following circumstances exist:

(1) The owner or operator is more than 15 days late in providing a schedule for closure or for meeting any date in the schedule for closure.

(2) The owner or operator declares an economic inability to comply with this rule, either by sending written notification to the director or through an action such as, but not limited to, filing for bankruptcy. [ARC 6982C, IAB 4/19/23, effective 5/24/23]