

WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §22-3-22A

§22-3-22a. Blasting restrictions; site specific blasting design requirement.

(a) For purposes of this section, the term "production blasting" means blasting that removes the overburden to expose underlying coal seams and does not include construction blasting.

(b) For purposes of this section, the term "construction blasting" means blasting to develop haul roads, mine access roads, coal preparation plants, drainage structures or underground coal mine sites and does not include production blasting.

(c) For purposes of this section, the term "protected structure" means any of the following structures that are situated outside the permit area: An occupied dwelling; a temporarily unoccupied dwelling which has been occupied within the past ninety days; a public building; a structure for commercial purposes; a school; a church; a community or institutional building; and a public park or a water well.

(d) Production blasting is prohibited within three hundred feet of a protected structure or within one hundred feet of a cemetery.

(e) Blasting within one thousand feet of a protected structure shall have a site-specific blast design approved by the Division of Mining and Reclamation. The site-specific blast design shall limit the type of explosives and detonating equipment, the size, the timing and frequency of blasts to do the following:

(1) Prevent injury to persons; (2) prevent damage to public and private property outside the permit area; (3) prevent adverse impacts on any underground mine; (4) prevent change in the course, channel or availability of ground or surface water outside the permit area; and (5) reduce dust outside the permit area.

In the development of a site-specific blasting plan, consideration shall be given, but is not limited to, the physical condition, type and quality of construction of the protected structure, the current use of the protected structure and the concerns of the owner or occupant living in the protected structures identified in the blasting schedule notification area.

(f) An owner or occupant of a protected structure may waive the blasting prohibition within three hundred feet. If a protected structure is occupied by a person other than the owner, both the owner and the occupant of the protected structure shall waive the blasting prohibition within three hundred feet in writing. The operator shall send copies of all written waivers executed pursuant to this subsection to the Division of Mining and Reclamation. Written waivers executed and filed with the Division of Mining and Reclamation are valid during the life of the permit or any renewals of the permit and are enforceable against any subsequent owners or occupants of the protected structure.

(g) The provisions of this section do not apply to the following: (1) Underground coal mining operations; (2) the surface operations and surface impacts incident to an underground coal mine; and (3) the extraction of minerals by underground mining methods or the surface impacts of the underground mining methods: Provided, That nothing contained in this section may be construed to exempt any coal mining operation from the general performance standards as contained in section thirteen of this article and any rules promulgated pursuant to said section.