WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §22-6-30

§22-6-30. Reclamation requirements.

The operator of a well shall reclaim the land surface within the area disturbed in siting, drilling, completing or producing the well in accordance with the following requirements:

(a) Within six months after the completion of the drilling process, the operator shall fill all the pits for containing muds, cuttings, salt water and oil that are not needed for production purposes, or are not required or allowed by state or federal law or rule and remove all concrete bases, drilling supplies and drilling equipment. Within such period, the operator shall grade or terrace and plant, seed or sod the area disturbed that is not required in production of the well where necessary to bind the soil and prevent substantial erosion and sedimentation. No pit may be used for the ultimate disposal of salt water. Salt water and oil shall be periodically drained or removed, and properly disposed of, from any pit that is retained so the pit is kept reasonably free of salt water and oil.

(b) Within six months after a well that has produced oil or gas is plugged, or after the plugging of a dry hole, the operator shall remove all production and storage structures, supplies and equipment, and any oil, salt water and debris, and fill any remaining excavations. Within such period, the operator shall grade or terrace and plant, seed or sod the area disturbed where necessary to bind the soil and prevent substantial erosion and sedimentation.

The director may, upon written application by an operator showing reasonable cause, extend the period within which reclamation shall be completed, but not to exceed a further six-month period.

If the director refuses to approve a request for extension, the refusal shall be by order.

(c) It shall be the duty of an operator to commence the reclamation of the area of land disturbed in siting, drilling, completing or producing the well in accordance with soil erosion and sediment control plans approved by the director or the director's designate.

(d) The director shall promulgate rules setting forth requirements for the safe and efficient installation and burying of all production and gathering pipelines where practical and reasonable except that such rules shall not apply to those pipelines regulated by the Public Service Commission.

WV Legislature