**Section 240.1260 Plugging and Restoration Requirements**

a) Coal or mineral groundwater monitoring wells, structure test holes, coal test holes and mineral test holes shall be plugged as follows:

1) If the total depth of the well or hole extends below the base of the freshwater as determined by the Department, the well or hole shall be plugged from total depth to the top of the bedrock with cement. When the plugging requirements of subsection (b)(1) would be impractical due to the presence of fractures in the bedrock or other geologic conditions that would prohibit the containment of fluids in the well, the Department may authorize alternative plugging requirements. In determining whether to approve and in selecting alternative plugging requirements, the Department shall consider the total depth of the hole and the depth and quality of the freshwater.

2) If the total depth of the well or test hole does not extend below the base of the freshwater as determined by the Department, the hole shall be plugged as stated above or may be plugged by circulating bentonite slurry from total depth to surface. When the plugging requirements of subsection (b)(2) would be impractical due to the presence of fractures in the bedrock or other geologic conditions that would prohibit the containment of fluids in the well, the permittee shall place a bridge plug above the fractured zone and circulate bentonite slurry from the plug to the surface.

b) At the conclusion of drilling, all drill cuttings shall be buried in drill pits or landspread (with permission of surface owner), and all pits used in drilling shall be filled and restored to support farm machinery, and all drilling debris shall be removed from the site.

(Source: Amended at 18 Ill. Reg. 8061, effective May 13, 1994)