**Section 1823.12 Prime Farmland: Soil Removal**

a) Surface coal mining and reclamation operations on prime farmland shall be conducted to:

1) Separately remove the entire A horizon or other suitable soil materials which will create a final soil having an equal or greater productive capacity than that which existed prior to mining;

2) Separately remove, or assure proper placement during mining, the B horizon of the soil, a combination of B horizon and underlying C horizon, or other suitable soil material that will create a reconstructed soil of equal or greater productive capacity than which existed before mining; and

3) Separately remove, the underlying C horizons, other strata, or a combination of horizons or other strata, to be used instead of the B horizon. When replaced, these combinations shall be equal to or more favorable for plant growth than the B horizon.

b) The minimum depth of soil and soil material to be removed for use in reconstruction of prime farmland soils shall be sufficient to meet the soil replacement requirements of Section 1823.14(a).

c) The B and/or C horizons may be left in place for surface disturbance areas if the Department determines the soil capability can be retained.

(Source: Amended at 22 Ill. Reg. 20131, effective November 5, 1998)