**Section 2501.40 Public Participation**

a) Any interested person may submit information and comments regarding the AML program and projects at any time. Information and comments should be directed to the Director of the Department, the Director of the Office of Mines and Minerals, or the Manager of the AML Division.

b) Verbal requests for information and written requests for information regarding the AML program shall be handled as expeditiously as possible. Requests made specifically pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act [5 ILCS 140] shall be made and handled in accordance with the generally applicable procedures of the Department of Natural Resources.

c) Copies of the following publications shall be available upon request at the Department's Office at 300 W. Jefferson Street, Springfield, Illinois 62702.

1) The Illinois State Reclamation Plan for Abandoned Mined Lands.

2) Office of Mines and Minerals Annual and Bi-Annual Reports.

3) Specific project reports which may be published for free distribution.

4) Brochures and program materials which may be published for free distribution.

5) The availability of such reports, brochures and program materials as may be prepared especially for free distribution shall not be deemed a waiver of the Department's right to charge fees reasonably calculated to reimburse its actual cost for reproducing and certifying public records requested pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act. The Department may charge fees reasonably calculated to reimburse its actual cost for providing multiple copies of free publications when multiple copies are requested.

d) The Department shall hold such public meetings as it determines necessary and appropriate to advise the public of planned or ongoing AML projects, and to solicit input and participation in the AML program. Any interested person may request, in writing, that the Department hold a public meeting in connection with any AML project or program activity. Upon receipt of a written request to hold a public meeting, the Department shall contact the landowners directly involved in the project, as well as the local government bodies that may be interested. The Department shall schedule a public meeting if it determines that sufficient public interest exists to warrant the public meeting.

(Source: Added at 22 Ill. Reg. 11382, effective June 23, 1998)