



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

Norman H. Bangarter
Governor
Dee C. Hansen
Executive Director
Dianne R. Nielson, Ph.D.
Division Director

355 West North Temple
3 Triad Center, Suite 350
Salt Lake City, Utah 84180-1203
801-538-5340

0010

March 19, 1992

TO: Coal Staff, B-team Inspectors

FROM: Rick P. Summers, Senior Hydrologist 

RE: NPDES Permit Interpretation, Department of Environmental Quality, Applicability of Limitations in Storm Events, Utah Fuel Co., Skyline Mine, ACT/007/005, Carbon County, Utah

SUMMARY

Discharges from the minesite sedimentation pond resulting from precipitation or snowmelt less than the 10 yr. - 24 hr. event must meet effluent limitations for: Total dissolved solids, sulfates, iron (acid soluble), iron (total), settleable solids, and pH. Interpretation from the DEQ regarding permit clause Part I. C.2. clarifies the intent of the permit to enforce limitations for all parameters except for settleable solids substituting TSS during storm events. Inspectors should note this discussion applies to discharges resulting from 10 yr. - 24 hour events only, larger events have a different permit requirement.

DISCUSSION

NPDES permit No. UT-0023540 issued to Coastal States Energy Company for the Skyline Mine for discharges from the sedimentation pond contains the following clause:

Part I. C. Specific Limitation and Self-Monitoring Requirements

2. Any overflow, increase in volume of a discharge or discharge from a bypass system caused by precipitation within any 24-hour period less than or equal to the 10-year, 24-hour precipitation event (or snowmelt of equivalent volume) at outfalls 001 or 002 may comply with the following limitations instead of the otherwise applicable limitations contained in Part I.

Effluent Characteristic

Daily Maximum

Settleable Solids

0.5 ml/L

The pH shall not be less than 6.5 standard units nor greater than 9.0 standard units. In addition to the monitoring requirements specified under Part I. C. 1., all effluent samples collected during storm water discharge events shall also be analyzed for settleable solids. Such analyses shall be conducted on grab samples.

Confusion resulting from this language in the permit left inspectors uncertain as to enforcement of the limitations for TDS (primarily) after storm events. Two interpretations of the language "...may comply with the following limitations instead of the otherwise applicable limitations contained in Part I.." (emphasis added) in the above paragraph are possible.

One interpretation is that discharge from storm events (less than 10 yr. - 24 hr) need only comply with settleable solids and pH instead of the Part I limits. Part I limits are the standard permit limits (e.g., TDS, Iron, Oil & Grease).

The other interpretation is that discharges from such events may meet the applicable parameter settleable solids limitation instead of Total Suspended Solids limitations, with the other parameters still included in the limitation schedule.

A series of phone conversations with Harry Campbell of the Department of Environmental Quality cumulated on March 9, 1992 with the Department's final interpretation of the permit clause. Mr. Campbell stated the correct interpretation for limitations that apply to discharges resulting from 10 yr. - 24 hr. or lessor events include **all the parameters contained in Part I. with only the substitution of SS for TSS.** His interpretation was the result of conversations with personnel in his Department. He stated a formal written interpretation of this clause would not be forwarded to the Division, but he agreed to a memo documenting the conversations for use in our inspection responsibilities.

cc: L. Braxton
B-team
Skyline Mine Inspector Notebook
File ACT/007/005 #2, #7

SKYNPDES.RS