

6115.0720 ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND CONDITIONS FOR MINING AND PROCESSING OF METALLIC MINERALS AND PEAT.

Subpart 1. **Additional application information.** All applicants for permits for mining and processing of metallic minerals and peat must provide the following information in addition to the requirements of Minnesota Statutes, section 103G.297 and part 6115.0660:

A. all plans and specifications regarding withdrawal, use, storage, and disposal of waters of the state;

B. details of the rates, volumes, and source of water to be appropriated and consumed in the processing, including all losses such as uncontrolled seepage, evaporation, plant losses, and discharge volumes;

C. criteria used in estimating the proposed appropriation, distribution, and discharge based on climatic averages and extremes;

D. details of the sources, rates, and volumes of water released from the mining operations involved;

E. details of the hydrologic and hydraulic impacts and effects of the operation on the watershed(s) including changes in basins, watercourses, and groundwater systems.

Subp. 2. **Commissioner's actions.** The commissioner shall analyze, evaluate, and make decisions on appropriations for mining and processing of metallic minerals based on facts submitted by the applicant pursuant to subpart 1 and part 6115.0660, subject to the conditions outlined in part 6115.0670 and the following considerations:

A. The commissioner shall direct the applicant to utilize available surplus water from preexisting mining operations or facilities, whether owned or controlled by the applicant or others, whenever feasible and practical unless justification is provided on why such practice should not be allowed. If the commissioner finds that an existing permittee has available unused water, for which there is inadequate justification, the commissioner, after notice and opportunity for hearing, shall amend the existing permit to promote better utilization of the water.

B. The commissioner shall base the allocation of water on consideration of the legal requirements for water quality, the impact of the appropriation on those requirements, and the following order of priorities of water supply sources located within reasonable distance to the mining or processing site:

(1) runoff from the mining areas;

(2) water from active mine pits and tailing basins when such water is not utilized for other purposes or operations;

- (3) water from existing mining operation reservoirs where such water is not utilized for other purposes or operations;
- (4) water from other mining and processing operations;
- (5) water from inactive mine pits;
- (6) water from streams appropriated during periods of high flows;
- (7) water from groundwater sources;
- (8) water collected and stored behind off-stream impoundments;
- (9) water collected and stored behind impoundments on streams; and
- (10) water from natural basins greater than 500 acres in size.

C. If the disposal of excess water is necessary and if any mining operation in the area has caused or will cause a substantial reduction in watercourse flow, the commissioner shall where feasible and practical require the permittee to discharge excess water in a manner that would restore the flow. Such action shall consider the existing and anticipated use of excess water by higher priority users and must be in compliance with appropriate rules of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 103G.315; 105.415*

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