

(K) "OPERATION" MEANS THE PIT LOCATED UPON A SINGLE TRACT OF LAND OR A CONTINUOUS PIT EMBRACING OR EXTENDING UPON TWO OR MORE CONTIGUOUS TRACTS OF LAND.

(L) "OPERATOR" MEANS A PERSON ENGAGED IN SURFACE MINING AS A PRINCIPAL, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM AN AGENT OR INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR WHO OWNS THE MINERALS AS A RESULT OF THE MINING.

(M) "OVERBURDEN" MEANS THE STRATA OR MATERIAL OVERLYING A MINERAL DEPOSIT, OR IN BETWEEN MINERAL DEPOSITS IN ITS NATURAL STATE, AND BEFORE ITS REMOVAL BY SURFACE MINING.

(N) "PERSON" MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL, RECEIVER, TRUSTEE, GUARDIAN, EXECUTOR, ADMINISTRATOR, FIDUCIARY, OR REPRESENTATIVE OF ANY KIND, OR ANY PARTNERSHIP, FIRM, ASSOCIATION, PUBLIC OR PRIVATE CORPORATION, OR ANY OTHER ENTITY.

(O) "PIT" MEANS THE PLACE ANY MINERALS ARE BEING MINED BY THE SURFACE MINING METHOD.

(P) "PRE-LAW SURFACE MINE" MEANS A NON-COAL SURFACE MINE WHICH WAS MINED PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF A PERMIT UNDER THIS SUBTITLE.

(Q) "RECLAMATION" MEANS THE REASONABLE REHABILITATION OF THE AFFECTED LAND FOR USEFUL PURPOSES AND THE PROTECTION OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE SURROUNDING AREA INCLUDING PONDS.

(R) "REFUSE" MEANS ALL WASTE SOIL, ROCK, MINERAL, SCRAP, TAILINGS, SLIMES, AND OTHER MATERIALS DIRECTLY CONNECTED WITH THE MINING, CLEANING, AND PREPARATION OF SUBSTANCES MINED AND INCLUDES ALL WASTE MATERIALS DEPOSITED ON OR IN THE PERMIT AREA FROM OTHER SOURCES.

(S) "SPOIL PILE" MEANS THE OVERBURDEN AND REJECT MATERIALS AS PILED OR DEPOSITED IN SURFACE MINING.

(T) (1) "SURFACE MINING" MEANS ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

(I) THE BREAKING OF THE SURFACE SOIL IN ORDER TO FACILITATE OR ACCOMPLISH THE EXTRACTION OR REMOVAL OF MINERALS;

(II) ANY ACTIVITY OR PROCESS CONSTITUTING ALL OR PART OF A PROCESS FOR THE EXTRACTION OR REMOVAL OF MINERALS FROM THEIR ORIGINAL LOCATION; AND

[(III) THE PREPARATION, WASHING, CLEANING, OR OTHER TREATMENT OF MINERALS SO AS TO MAKE