**Section 220.150 Auger Mining**

a) Auger mining; planning.

 Auger mining shall be planned and conducted by the operator to insure against any hazard to underground workings or future underground workings located at or near such auger operations and all auger holes shall be located so as to prevent:

1) The disruption of the ventilation system of any active underground mine;

2) Inundation hazards from surface water entering any active underground mine;

3) Damage to the roof and ribs of active underground workings; and

4) Intersection of auger holes with underground mine workings known to contain dangerous quantities of impounded water.

b) Auger mining; inspection.

1) The face of all highwalls, to a distance of fifty (50) feet on both sides of each drilling site, shall be inspected by a certified person before any augering operation is begun, and at least once (1) during each coal producing shift and all loose hazardous material shall be removed from the drilling site before persons are permitted to enter the drilling area. The results of all such inspections shall be recorded daily in an approved book.

2) In addition, the face of all highwalls, to a distance of fifty (50) feet on both sides of each drilling site, shall be inspected frequently by a certified person during any auger operation conducted either during or after a heavy rainfall or during any period of intermittent freezing and thawing, and the results of such inspections shall be recorded as provided in paragraph (b)(1) of this Section.

3) When an auger hole penetrates an abandoned or mined out area of an underground mine, tests for methane and oxygen deficiency shall be made at the collar of the hole by a qualified person using an approved device to determine if dangerous quantities of methane or oxygen-deficient air are present or being emitted. If methane or oxygen-deficient air is found, no further work shall be performed until the atmosphere has been made safe.

4) Tests for oxygen deficiency shall be conducted with a permissible flame safety lamp or other approved means and all tests for methane shall be conducted with an approved methane detector.

5) Internal combustion engines shall not be operated in the vicinity of any auger hole in which tests for methane or oxygen deficiency are being made.

c) Auger holes; restriction against entering.

 No person shall be permitted to enter an auger hole except with the approval of an authorized representative of the Department, which representative has inspected such hole and has determined that it is safe for entering.

d) Augering equipment; overhead protection.

1) Auger machines which are exposed to highwall hazards together with all those parts of any coal elevating conveyors where persons are required to work during augering operation, shall be covered with heavy gauge screen which does not obstruct the view of the highwall and is strong enough to prevent injuries to workmen from falling material.

2) No work shall be done under any overhang and when a crew is engaged in connecting or disconnecting auger sections under a highwall, at least one (1) person shall be assigned to observe the highwall for possible movement.

e) Auger equipment; operation.

1) Persons shall be kept clear of the auger train while it is in motion and shall not be permitted to pass under or over an auger train, except where adequate crossing facilities are provided.

2) Persons shall be kept clear of auger sections being swung into position.

3) No person, including the auger machine operator, shall, where practicable, be stationed in direct line with a borehole during augering operations.

4) Operators of auger equipment shall not leave the controls of such equipment while the auger is in operation.

5) Adequate illumination shall be provided for work areas after dark.

f) Auger holes; blocking.

 Auger holes shall be blocked with highwall spoil or other suitable material before they are abandoned.

g) Highwall; vicinity of augering equipment.

 No work shall be done on the highwall in the vicinity of augering equipment while it is in operation.

h) Maps.

1) Two (2) or more adjacent mines shall not be intersected without the express approval of the Mining Board. If two (2) or more companies make such a request for approval of such a project, a plan for intersecting such mines shall be submitted to the Mining Board for approval. Such plan shall specify the reasons for the proposed intersection, and shall include information regarding the following:

A) Whether the mines proposed to be intersected are surface, shaft or auger mines;

B) Whether there is any water impounded at the affected existing mines;

C) Whether the mines are abandoned; and

D) Whether any reclamation has been performed at the affected mines, and the year in which such reclamation was performed.

2) The conditions of any underground mine being intersected by auger mining shall be noted in the request. If there is water in the abandoned underground mine, a clear proposal shall be made for how water or gases will be controlled both before and after the proposed intersecting operations are to be done, and accurate maps of same shall be furnished to the Department when submitting requests for mining into active mines. All applicable federal and state statutes and rules shall be complied with. The District State Mine Inspector shall be notified and be present when the initial intersecting with underground mines is performed, and may stop the auger at any time that hazards are noted by him.

3) Auger mining shall not be done any nearer than fifty (50) feet to the boundary of an active underground mine, unless the work is coordinated with the consent of both companies and according to this Part. The proposed plan shall be made showing all preparations made in the underground mine to guard against any changes or interruptions in ventilation.

4) Maps of both the adjoining mines must be submitted to the Department with all requests for intersecting two (2) mines whether they be surface mines or surface and underground mine every six (6) months. Maps must be on the same scale, showing quarter sections, county, township, name of mines involved, a profile drawing and measurements in feet and decimals thereof. The rise and dip of the bottom of the coal seam in both mines. A contour overlay must be included with all requests. Maps must be no smaller than one hundred (100) feet to one (1) inch. Maps must have north plainly marked, must be signed by an engineer registered by the State of Illinois with his or her registration number noted. Maps must show the depth of penetration of auger and size of auger used or proposed to be used.

5) The depth and penetration, directions of auger holes shall be platted on a map showing all adjacent mined areas. This map shall be kept current at the end of each shift by a certified person and made available to the District State Mine Inspector and interested persons.

6) An accurate map of all auger mined areas, showing railroads, highways, and structures which may be affected by mining will be furnished. It shall show all active and abandoned surface mines, all active and abandoned underground mines, and all water impoundments, rivers, and streams. This may be done with a map and an overlay or transparent which must be accurate and on the same scale as the map. All maps must be submitted to the Department every six (6) months by an engineer registered by the State of Illinois with a registration number legibly printed on the legend, which must include a complete description of location of the mining.