

3.09 SURFACE COAL MINING BLASTER CERTIFICATION

- *Question: As part of coal mining, do I plan to be responsible for the use of explosives in the project?*

Why do I need this approval?

Blasting on surface coal mining operations is required to be conducted under the direction of a person who has been certified as a blaster by the Department. The blaster is the person who is directly responsible for the use of explosives on surface coal mining operations. The blaster must be familiar with the blasting plan and site specific performance standards for the mining operation.

What laws or regulations give MDE the legal authority to issue this approval?

FEDERAL: Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-87)
STATE: Environment Article, Title 15, Subtitle 5 and 6; COMAR 26.20.22.08.

What is the process to get this approval?

- 1) The Department examines candidates for the blaster certification who meet the qualifications for certification, including a training course issued by the Department, or have received training and certification as a blaster in a state with a federally approved blaster certification program.
- 2) Upon passing the examination, a candidate for blaster certification is issued a certificate indicating that they are a certified blaster for a period of three years.
- 3) An applicant for recertification must be currently certified and must submit proof that they have had at least one year of blasting experience in the last three years.

Are there any other requirements?

Persons applying to become certified blasters shall:

- a) Be at least 21 years of age;
- b) Have received at least one year of qualifying experience under the direction and supervision of a certified blaster in the handling and use of explosives; and
- c) Receive training including, but not limited to, the technical aspects of blasting operations; and state and federal laws concerning the storage, transportation and use of explosives.

How long should I expect it to take to get this approval once I submit a complete application?

Once the applicant passes the exam, a certification card is mailed.

Once I get this approval, how long will it last?

Three years

How much will this approval cost?

No certification fee.
There is a minimal charge for the training course

Do I need to know any additional information?

The certification of a blaster may be suspended or revoked by the Department in accordance with COMAR 26.20.22.08G for any of the following reasons:

- Noncompliance with any final order of the Department
- Unlawful use in the work place of, or current addiction to, alcohol, narcotics, or other dangerous drugs
- Violation of any provision of the State or federal explosives laws or regulations
- Providing false information or a misrepresentation to obtain certification
- Refusal to exhibit his or her certificate to any authorized representative of the Department

Who do I contact with additional questions?

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