USDA NRCS
United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Conservation Practice Standard Overview

Land Reclamation, Toxic Discharge Control (455)

Toxic discharge control is used to reduce acid or otherwise toxic aqueous discharge from abandoned mines or mine waste.

Practice Information

This practice is used in areas that have been mined where acid or toxic drainage is degrading the natural resources. The purposes of controlling toxic discharge from these sites are to improve water quality, improve fish and wildlife habitat, eliminate unsightly residues and odors, reduce erosion by improving vegetation potential, and restore the area to a beneficial use

The primary methods of toxic discharge control include:

- Mine sealing—Reducing water entry into the mine.
- Infiltration control—Drainage and sealing the surface.
- Daylighting—Surface mining coal seams and treating the disturbed areas to reduce toxic discharge.
- Neutralizing—Treating discharge water with alkaline material, or other appropriate chemicals.

Operation and maintenance requirements will include periodic inspections with prompt repair of damaged areas and monitoring to ensure the continued success of the practice.

Common Associated Practices

Land Reclamation, Toxic Discharge Control (455) is commonly applied with conservation practices such as Mine Shaft and Adit Closing (457); Land Reclamation, Abandoned Mine Land (543); Water and Sediment Control Basin (638); and Pipeline (516).

For further information, contact your local NRCS field office.