

REVIEW OF PENNSYLVANIA'S MINE
DRAINAGE POLLUTION ABATEMENT PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

The 1965 amendments to Pennsylvania's Clean Streams Law prohibit the discharge of acid mine drainage into the streams of the Commonwealth after January 1, 1967. Because of this new legislation the coal mining industry and state government are extremely aware of the necessity for new techniques in treatment and prevention of the flow of acid mine drainage from the active mines of the Commonwealth in order to keep the coal mining industry in Pennsylvania. Approximately one third of the total volume of mine drainage presently polluting the streams of the Commonwealth originates from "active coal operations" and two thirds come from "abandoned mine discharges." To date, the Commonwealth has allocated grants totaling \$2,805,631 for mine drainage research. The Commonwealth is tackling its abatement activities on a "watershed-by-watershed" basis. Engineering studies are being made to pinpoint sources of pollution and then remedial action programs are defined and initiated on a priority basis. The basic premise of the Department approach divides the abandoned mine abatement problem into two logical divisions: (1) Volume reduction or contamination prevention; (2) Treatment of mine drainage. The treatment approach can be further divided into two basic approaches, i.e., treatment solely for the return of a minimum quality but acceptable discharge to streams and complete regeneration of mine drainage to prepare a satisfactory water for reuse.

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