

**4410.7914 RIGHT-OF-WAY CLEARANCE AND MAINTENANCE.**

A. The permittee shall ensure that it clears the right-of-way only to the extent necessary to assure safe drilling operations and to provide suitable access for construction and operation.

B. Equipment used in right-of-way preparation and maintenance shall comply with the noise control rules of the Pollution Control Agency published in chapter 7030.

C. Where the right-of-way as planned contacts surface water and roads, clearing by the permittee shall be done so that a screen of the maximum possible width of any existing natural vegetation is left along the right-of-way adjacent to the surface water or road. If the natural vegetation that existed prior to clearing cannot be left as a screen and suitable natural regeneration is not likely to occur within one full growing season following right-of-way restoration, native types of shrubs and trees shall be planted by the permittee to provide an adequate screen. Where the right-of-way as planned contacts surface water of any size and type, the permittee shall act in accordance with federal law, including Executive Order 11990, that protects wetlands of all sizes and types, in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 84.083, and chapters 103A, 103B, and 103E to 103G, which cover shoreland management, floodplain management, wild and scenic rivers, and permits required for protected waters, and in accordance with any other federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances. The amount and species of vegetation that will be planted to replace the vegetation removed from any Minnesota highway right-of-way shall be specified by the Minnesota Department of Transportation or appropriate county or local authority.

D. Investigative activities by the permittee in the vicinity of streams shall comply with Minnesota Statutes, chapter 103G, permit requirements of the Department of Natural Resources so as to minimize damage to the natural condition of the area.

E. Stream banks disturbed during right-of-way clearance or investigative activities shall be stabilized, reclaimed, and revegetated by the permittee using native plant species indigenous to the area.

F. Areas where natural vegetation has been removed and suitable natural regeneration is not likely to occur within one full growing season, shall be revegetated by the permittee using native plant species indigenous to the area within one full growing season after temporary abandonment.

G. Where significant grading or excavation or both is required, precautions shall be taken by the permittee to protect and segregate top soil.

H. Compaction of cropland by the permittee shall be kept to a minimum and confined to as small an area as practicable.

I. Precautions to protect livestock and crops shall be taken by the permittee.

J. All appropriate precautions to protect against pollution of the environment shall be taken by the permittee.

K. The permittee shall repair or replace all drainage tiles broken or damaged during right-of-way preparation or investigative activities unless otherwise negotiated with the landowner or tenant, as appropriate, on whose property the tiles are located.

L. The permittee is responsible for the repair of private roads and lanes damaged when moving equipment or when obtaining access to the right-of-way and for the reimbursement to the landowner or tenant, as appropriate, for crop loss resulting from access to right-of-way damaged during preparation or drilling operations.

M. The permittee shall replace or repair all fences and gates removed or damaged during right-of-way preparation and investigative activities unless otherwise negotiated with the landowner or tenant, as appropriate.

N. Shelterbelts and trees shall be protected by the permittee whenever possible. If shelterbelts and trees must be cut, native shrubs and trees shall be planted to provide protection in accordance with the request of the landowner or tenant, as appropriate, unless otherwise negotiated with the landowner or tenant, as appropriate.

O. The permittee shall restore cropland to substantially its original condition, unless otherwise negotiated with the landowner or tenant, as appropriate. Restoration shall include grading, topsoil replacement, subsoiling and disking, or other methods as negotiated with the landowner or tenant, as appropriate.

P. The permittee shall return pasture to its former level of productivity, unless otherwise negotiated with the landowner or tenant, as appropriate. Pasture restoration shall include planting native or tame grasses or other restoration methods as negotiated with the landowner or tenant, as appropriate.

Q. The permittee shall, unless negotiated with the landowner or tenant, as appropriate, restore other areas to substantially their original condition.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 116C.724*

**History:** *10 SR 2290; 18 SR 614*

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