



# U.S. Office of Surface Mining **News Release**



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Contact: Peter Mali  
(202) 208-2565  
[pmali@osmre.gov](mailto:pmali@osmre.gov)

## **OSM Issues Final Rule Increasing Civil Penalties**

(Washington DC) – The U.S. Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) today announced that it is publishing a final rule increasing the penalty amounts it assesses against coal companies that violate provisions of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977. The rule implements the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act, which requires that civil monetary penalties be adjusted for inflation at least once every four years. The adjustments are made in an effort to maintain the deterrent effect of civil penalties and promote compliance with the law. The penalty increases contained in the rule are based on increases in the consumer price index and a formula specified in the Inflation Adjustment Act. Under the Inflation Adjustment Act, OSM has increased its civil penalties on three previous occasions, in 1997, 2001, and 2005.

OSM carries out the requirements of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 in cooperation with states and Indian tribes. OSM's objectives are to ensure that coal mining activities are conducted in a manner that protects citizens and the environment during mining, to ensure that the land is restored to beneficial use after mining, and to mitigate the effects of past mining by aggressively pursuing reclamation of abandoned coal mines.

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