

§ 3483.4

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on the next rental or royalty on producing Federal leases due under the Federal lease.

(2) The minimum annual production requirements shall be proportionately reduced for that portion of a Federal lease year for which suspension of operations and production is directed or granted by the authorized officer, in the interest of conservation of recoverable coal reserves and other resources, in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section.

(3) The term, including the diligent development period, of any Federal lease shall be extended by adding to it any period of suspension in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section, of operations and production.

(4) A suspension in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section does not suspend the permit and the operator/lessee's reclamation obligation under the permit.

[47 FR 33179, July 30, 1982; 47 FR 53366, Nov. 26, 1982. Redesignated at 48 FR 41589, Sept. 16, 1983, and amended at 53 FR 49986, Dec. 13, 1988; 62 FR 44370, Aug. 20, 1997]

§ 3483.4 Payment of advance royalty in lieu of continued operation.

(a) Advance royalty may only be accepted in lieu of continued operation upon application to and approval by the authorized officer.

(b) However, any request by an operator/lessee for suspension of the continued operation requirement and payment of advance royalty in lieu thereof shall be made no later than 30 days after the beginning of the continued operation year. If an operator/lessee requests authorization to pay advance royalty in lieu of continued operation later than 30 days after the beginning of any continued operation year, the authorized officer may condition acceptance of advance royalty on the payment of a late payment charge on the amount of the advance royalty due. The late payment charge will be calculated in accordance with 30 CFR 218.20.

(c) For advance royalty purposes, the value of the Federal coal will be calculated in accordance with § 3485.2 of this title and this section. When advance royalty is accepted in lieu of continued operation, it shall be paid in

an amount equivalent to the production royalty that would be owed on the production of 1 percent of the recoverable coal reserves or the Federal LMU recoverable coal reserves. The advance royalty rate for an LMU shall be deemed to be 8 percent where the Federal LMU recoverable coal reserves contained in the LMU would be recovered by only underground mining operations and 12½ percent where the Federal LMU recoverable coal reserves contained in the LMU would be recovered only by other mining operations. For LMU's that contain Federal LMU recoverable coal reserves that would be recovered by a combination of underground and other mining methods, the advance royalty rate shall be deemed to be 12½ percent. The unit value of the recoverable coal reserves for determining the advance royalty payment for a Federal lease or LMU shall be:

(1) The unit value for production royalty purposes of coal produced and sold under the Federal coal lease or LMU during the immediately preceding production royalty payment period; or

(2) Computed at the average unit price at which coal from other Federal leases in the same region was sold during such period, if no coal was produced and sold under the Federal coal lease or LMU during the immediately preceding royalty payment period, or if the authorized officer finds that there is an insufficient number of such sales to determine such value equitably; or

(3) Determined by the authorized officer, if there were no sales of Federal coal from such region during such period or if the authorized officer finds that there is an insufficient number of such sales to determine such value equitably.

(d) The aggregate number of years during the period of any Federal coal lease or LMU for which advance royalty may be accepted in lieu of the requirement of continued operation shall not exceed 10. For Federal leases issued prior to August 4, 1976, advance royalty shall not be accepted in lieu of continued operation for more than a total of 10 years following the first lease readjustment after August 4, 1976. Any continued operation year in which advance royalty is paid shall be deemed a