

Chapter 19.59 – SURFACE MINING AND ROCK CRUSHING

Section 19.59.010 - Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this section is to regulate surface mining and rock crushing operations to minimize adverse effects on surrounding land uses and to ensure restoration of the mining site to a condition suitable for other uses upon completion of the mining operation.

Section 19.59.020 - Requirements

Surface mining and rock crushing operations must comply with the following requirements:

1. The proposed operation shall be located more than 1,000 feet from any residence or if it will be located within 1,000 feet of a residence, waivers shall be obtained from the owner(s) of said residence(s). If waivers are not obtained, then a Conditional Use Permit is required. The 1,000-foot distance is measured from the applicant designated mineral resource area that may include the boundaries of the property or the zone.
2. All surface mining and/or rock crushing activities for which blasting or explosive demolition is used shall be subject to the minimum standards in Section 19.60.
3. No excavation or processing shall be permitted within 50 feet of a public road or abutting property line or within 100 feet of a residence without the consent of the owner of the abutting property, and in no case shall excavation impair lateral support or cause earth movements or erosion to extend beyond the exterior boundary lines of the surface mining property.
4. Prior to commencing excavation or processing, the applicant must submit to the County Planning Office the Reclamation Permit and Reclamation Plan approved by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources or the state governmental agency having authority over the mining operation. For sites and operations which may be exempted from state control, the applicant shall submit a reclamation plan prepared by a professional engineer, landscape architect, or Reclamation Plan prepared and/or approved by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Surface mining and/or rock crushing operations active at the time this chapter is adopted shall be allowed to continue to function without obtaining a new Administrative Use Permit or Conditional Use Permit. Active surface mining and/or rock crushing operations are defined as having an approved permit issued by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources; Conditional Use Permit or Administrative Use Permit issued by Whitman County; or having a continuous cycle of mining, crushing, stockpiling and/or removal of materials.

5. Other conditions determined necessary by the Board of Adjustment to insure conformity with the provisions of this title and protection of the public health, safety and welfare, including but not limited to Section 19.06.010 (2).

The Conditional Use Permit or Administrative Use Permit may be valid for the duration set by the Board of Adjustment, Administrative Use Permit or until the mineral resource is exhausted.