11.9 Western Surface Coal Mining

11.9.1 General[1]

There are 12 major coal fields in the western states (excluding the Pacific Coast and Alaskan fields), as shown in Figure 11.9-1. Together, they account for more than 64 percent of the surface minable coal reserves in the United States.[2] The 12 coal fields have varying characteristics that may influence fugitive dust emission rates from mining operations including overburden and coal seam thicknesses and structure, mining equipment, operating procedures, terrain, vegetation, precipitation and surface moisture, wind speeds, and temperatures. The operations at a typical western surface mine are shown in Figure 11.9-2. All operations that involve movement of soil or coal, or exposure of erodible surfaces, generate some amount of fugitive dust.

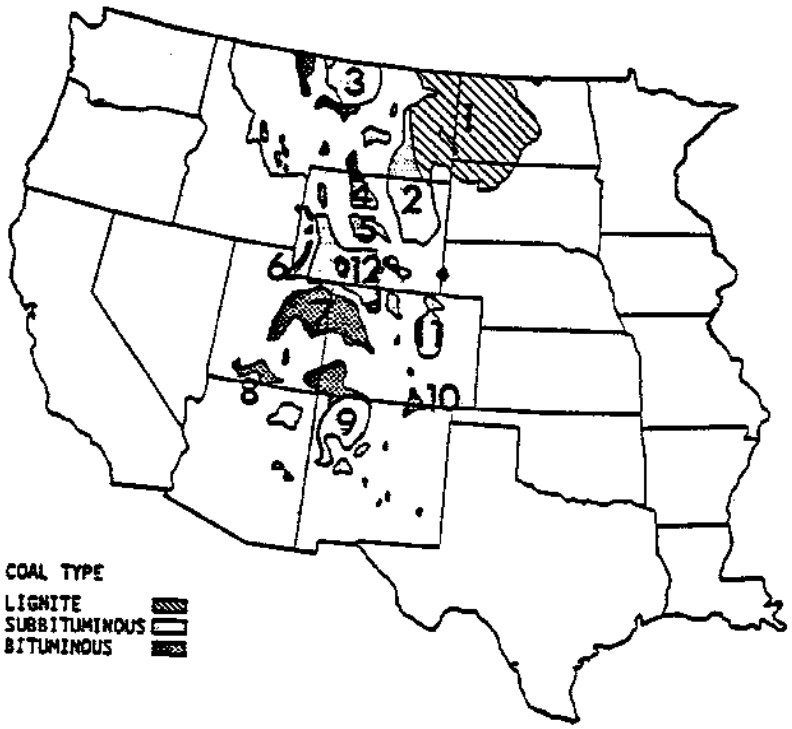
The initial operation is removal of topsoil and subsoil with large scrapers. The topsoil is carried by the scrapers to cover a previously mined and regraded area as part of the reclamation process or is placed in temporary stockpiles. The exposed overburden, the earth that is between the topsoil and the coal seam, is leveled, drilled, and blasted. Then the overburden material is removed down to the coal seam, usually by a dragline or a shovel and truck operation. It is placed in the adjacent mined cut, forming a spoils pile. The uncovered coal seam is then drilled and blasted. A shovel or front end loader loads the broken coal into haul trucks, and it is taken out of the pit along graded haul roads to the tipple, or truck dump. Raw coal sometimes may be dumped onto a temporary storage pile and later rehandled by a front end loader or bulldozer.

At the tipple, the coal is dumped into a hopper that feeds the primary crusher, then is conveyed through additional coal preparation equipment such as secondary crushers and screens to the storage area. If the mine has open storage piles, the crushed coal passes through a coal stacker onto the pile. The piles, usually worked by bulldozers, are subject to wind erosion. From the storage area, the coal is conveyed to a train loading facility and is put into rail cars. At a captive mine, coal will go from the storage pile to the power plant.

During mine reclamation, which proceeds continuously throughout the life of the mine, overburden spoils piles are smoothed and contoured by bulldozers. Topsoil is placed on the graded spoils, and the land is prepared for revegetation by furrowing, mulching, etc. From the time an area is disturbed until the new vegetation emerges, all disturbed areas are subject to wind erosion.

11.9.2 Emissions

Predictive emission factor equations for open dust sources at western surface coal mines are presented in Tables 11.9-1 and 11.9-2. Each equation applies to a single dust-generating activity, such as vehicle traffic on haul roads. The predictive equation explains much of the observed variance in emission factors by relating emissions to three sets of source parameters: (1) measures of source activity or energy expended (e. g., speed and weight of a vehicle traveling on an unpaved road); (2) properties of the material being disturbed (e. g., suspendable fines in the surface material of an unpaved road); and (3) climate (in this case, mean wind speed).



	Coal field	Strippable reserves (10^6 tons)
1	Fort Union	23,529
2	Powder River	56,727
3	North Central	All underground
4	Bighorn Basin	All underground
5	Wind River	3
6	Hams Fork	1,000
7	Uinta	308
8	Southwestern Utah	224
9	San Juan River	2,318
10	Raton Mesa	All underground
11	Denver	All underground
12	Green River	2,120

Figure 11.9-1. Coal fields of the western United States.[3]

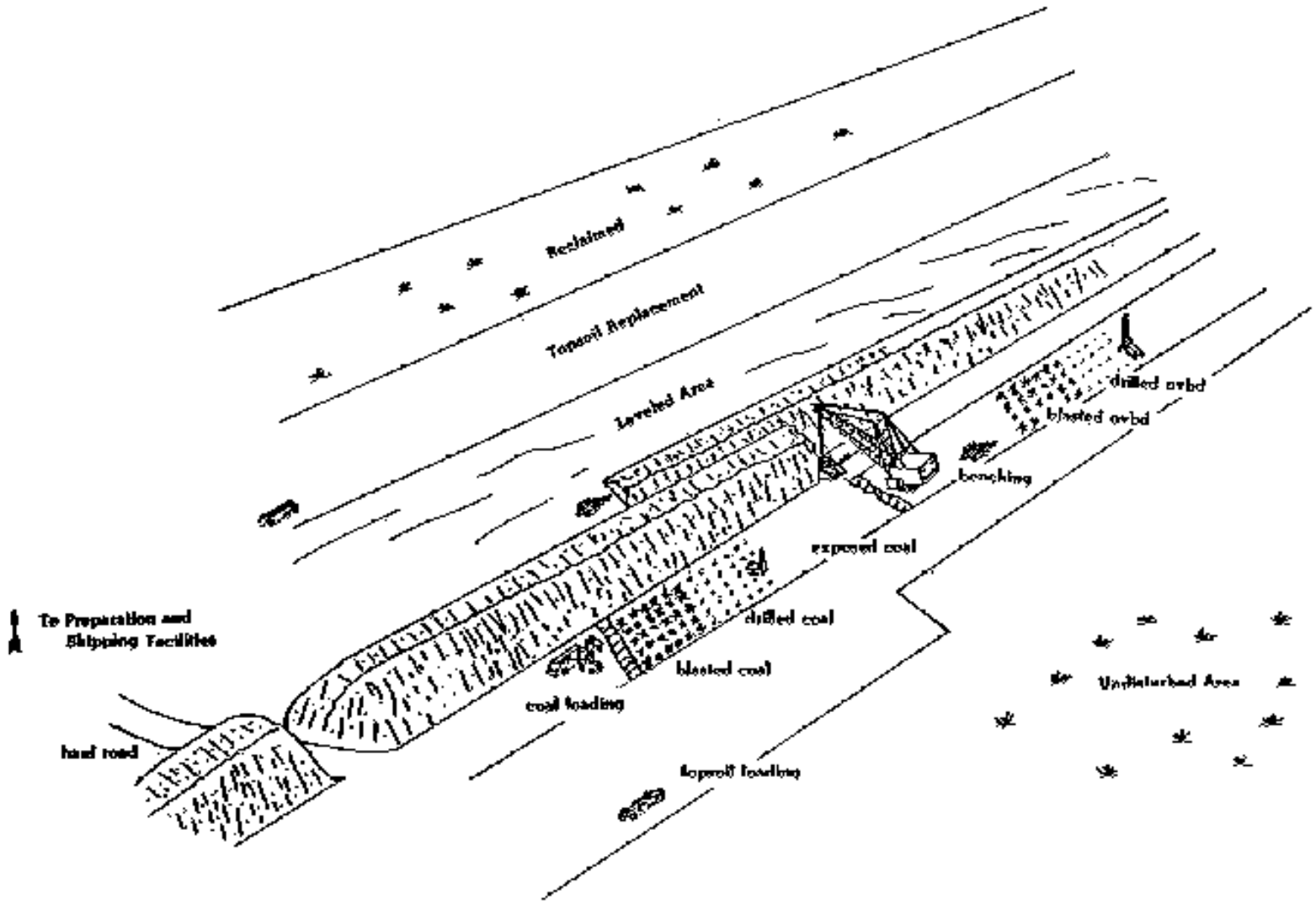


Figure 11.9-2. Operations at typical western surface coal mines.

The equations may be used to estimate particulate emissions generated per unit of source extent or activity (e. g., distance traveled by a haul truck or mass of material transferred). The equations were developed through field sampling of various western surface mine types and are thus applicable to any of the surface coal mines located in the western United States.

In Tables 11.9-1 and 11.9-2, the assigned quality ratings apply within the ranges of source conditions that were tested in developing the equations given in Table 11.9-3. However, the equations should be derated 1 letter value (e. g., A to B) if applied to eastern surface coal mines.

In using the equations to estimate emissions from sources found in a specific western surface mine, it is necessary that reliable values for correction parameters be determined for the specific sources of interest if the assigned quality ratings of the equations are to be applicable. For example, actual silt content of coal or overburden measured at a facility should be used instead of estimated values. In the event that site-specific values for correction parameters cannot be obtained, the appropriate geometric mean values from Table 11.9-3 may be used, but the assigned quality rating of each emission factor equation should be reduced by 1 level (e. g., A to B).

Emission factors for open dust sources not covered in Table 11.9-3 are in Table 11.9-4. These factors were determined through source testing at various western coal mines.

The factors in Table 11.9-4 for mine locations I through V were developed for specific geographical areas. Tables 11.9-5 and 11.9-6 present characteristics of each of these mines (areas). A "mine-specific" emission factor should be used only if the characteristics of the mine for which an emissions estimate is needed are very similar to those of the mine for which the emission factor was developed. The other (nonspecific) emission factors were developed at a variety of mine types and thus are applicable to any western surface coal mine.

As an alternative to the single valued emission factors given in Table 11.9-4 for train or truck loading and for truck or scraper unloading, two empirically derived emission factor equations are presented in Section 13.2.4 of this document. Each equation was developed for a source operation (i. e., batch drop and continuous drop, respectively) comprising a single dust-generating mechanism that crosses industry lines.

Because the predictive equations allow emission factor adjustment to specific source conditions, the equations should be used in place of the single-valued factors in Table 11.9-4 for the sources identified above, if emission estimates for a specific western surface coal mine are needed. However, the generally higher quality ratings assigned to the equations are applicable only if: (1) reliable values of correction parameters have been determined for the specific sources of interest, and (2) the correction parameter values lie within the ranges tested in developing the equations. Caution must be exercised so that only the unbound (sorbed) moisture (i. e., not any bound moisture) is used in determining the moisture content for input to the Chapter 13 equations.

Table 11.9-1 (English Units). EMISSION FACTOR EQUATIONS FOR UNCONTROLLED OPEN DUST SOURCES AT WESTERN SURFACE COAL MINES[a]

Operation	Material	Emissions By Particle Size Range (Aerodynamic Diameter)[b,c]				Units	EMISSION FACTOR RATING
		Emission Factor Equations		Scaling Factors			
		TSP ≤30 µm	≤15 µm	≤10 µm[d]	≤2.5 µm/TSP[e]		
Blasting[f]	Coal or overburden	$0.000014(A)^{1.5}$	ND	0.52[e]	0.03	lb/blast	C_DD
Truck loading	Coal	$\frac{1.16}{(M)^{1.2}}$	$\frac{0.119}{(M)^{0.9}}$	0.75	0.019	lb/ton	BBCC
Bulldozing	Coal	$\frac{78.4\ (s)^{1.2}}{(M)^{1.3}}$	$\frac{18.6\ (s)^{1.5}}{(M)^{1.4}}$	0.75	0.022	lb/hr	CCDD
	Overburden	$\frac{5.7\ (s)^{1.2}}{(M)^{1.3}}$	$\frac{1.0\ (s)^{1.5}}{(M)^{1.4}}$	0.75	0.105	lb/hr	BCDD
Dragline	Overburden	$\frac{0.0021\ (d)^{1.1}}{(M)^{0.3}}$	$\frac{0.0021\ (d)^{0.7}}{(M)^{0.3}}$	0.75	0.017	lb/yd^3	BCDD
Vehicle traffic[g]							
Grading		$0.040\ (S)^{2.5}$	$0.051\ (S)^{2.0}$	0.60	0.031	lb/VMT	CCDD
Active storage pile[h] (wind erosion and maintenance)	Coal	0.72 u	ND	ND	ND	$\frac{\text{lb}}{(\text{acre})(\text{hr})}$	C[i]_ _ _

[a] Reference 1, except as noted. VMT = vehicle miles traveled. ND = no data. Quality ratings coded where "Q, X, Y, Z" are ratings for ≤30 µm, ≤15 µm, ≤10 µm, and ≤2.5 µm, respectively. See also note below.

[b] Particulate matter less than or equal to 30 µm in aerodynamic diameter is sometimes termed "suspendable particulate" and is often used as a surrogate for TSP (total suspended particulate). TSP denotes what is measured by a standard high volume sampler (see Section 13.2).

[c] Symbols for equations:

A = horizontal area (ft^2), with blasting depth ≤ 70 ft. Not for vertical face of a bench.
M = material moisture content (%)
s = material silt content (%)
u = wind speed (mph)
d = drop height (ft)
W = mean vehicle weight (tons)
S = mean vehicle speed (mph)
w = mean number of wheels

Table 11.9-1 (cont.).

[d] Multiply the ≤15-µm equation by this fraction to determine emissions, except as noted.
[e] Multiply the TSP predictive equation by this fraction to determine emissions.
[f] Blasting factor taken from a reexamination of field test data reported in Reference 1. See Reference 4.
[g] To estimate emissions from traffic on unpaved surfaces by vehicles such as haul trucks, light-to-medium duty vehicles, or scrapers in the travel mode, see the unpaved road emission factor equation in AP-42 Section 13.2.2.
[h] Coal storage pile factor taken from Reference 5. To estimate emissions on a shorter time scale (e. g., worst-case day), see the procedure presented in Section 13.2.5.
[i] Rating applicable to mine types I, II, and IV (see Tables 11.9-5 and 11.9-6).

Note: Section 234 of the Clean Air Act of 1990 required EPA to review and revise the emission factors in this Section (and models used to evaluate ambient air quality impact), to ensure that they did not overestimate emissions from western surface coal mines. Due to resource and technical limitations, the haul road emission factors were isolated to receive the most attention during these studies, as the largest contributor to emissions. Resultant model evaluation with revised emission factors have improved model prediction for total suspended particulate (TSP); however, there is still a tendency for overprediction of particulate matter impact for PM-10, for as yet undetermined causes, prompting the Agency to make a policy decision not to use them for regulatory applications to these sources. However, the technical consideration exists that no better alternative data are currently available and the information should be made known. Users should accordingly use these factors with caution and awareness of their likely limitations.

Table 11.9-2 (Metric Units). EMISSION FACTOR EQUATIONS FOR UNCONTROLLED OPEN DUST SOURCES AT WESTERN SURFACE COAL MINES[a]

Operation	Material	Emissions By Particle Size Range (Aerodynamic Diameter)[b,c]				Units	EMISSION FACTOR RATING
		Emission Factor Equations		Scaling Factors			
		TSP ≤30 µm	≤15 µm	≤10 µm[d]	≤2.5 µm/TSP[e]		
Blasting[f]	Coal or overburden	$0.00022(A)^{1.5}$	ND	0.52[e]	0.03	kg/blast	C_DD
Truck loading	Coal	$\frac{0.580}{(M)^{1.2}}$	$\frac{0.0596}{(M)^{0.9}}$	0.75	0.019	kg/Mg	BBCC
Bulldozing	Coal	$\frac{35.6\ (s)^{1.2}}{(M)^{1.3}}$	$\frac{8.44\ (s)^{1.5}}{(M)^{1.4}}$	0.75	0.022	kg/hr	CCDD
	Overburden	$\frac{2.6\ (s)^{1.2}}{(M)^{1.3}}$	$\frac{0.45\ (s)^{1.5}}{(M)^{1.4}}$	0.75	0.105	kg/hr	BCDD
Dragline	Overburden	$\frac{0.0046\ (d)^{1.1}}{(M)^{0.3}}$	$\frac{0.0029\ (d)^{0.7}}{(M)^{0.3}}$	0.75	0.017	kg/m^3	BCDD
Vehicle traffic[g]							
Grading		$0.0034\ (S)^{2.5}$	$0.0056\ (S)^{2.0}$	0.60	0.031	kg/VKT	CCDD
Active storage pile[h] (wind erosion and maintenance)	Coal	1.8 u	ND	ND	ND	$\frac{\text{kg}}{(\text{hectare})(\text{hr})}$	C[i]_ _ _

[a] Reference 1, except as noted. VKT = vehicle kilometers traveled. ND = no data. Quality ratings coded as "QXYZ", where Q, X, Y, and Z are quality ratings for ≤30 µm, ≤15 µm, ≤10 µm, and ≤2.5 µm, respectively. See also note below.

[b] Particulate matter less than or equal to 30 µm in aerodynamic diameter is sometimes termed "suspendable particulate" and is often used as a surrogate for TSP (total suspended particulate). TSP denotes what is measured by a standard high volume sampler (see Section 13.2).

[c] Symbols for equations:

A = horizontal area (m^2), with blasting depth ≤ 21 m. Not for vertical face of a bench.
M = material moisture content (%)
s = material silt content (%)
u = wind speed (m/sec)
d = drop height (m)
W = mean vehicle weight (Mg)
S = mean vehicle speed (kph)
w = mean number of wheels

Table 11.9-2 (cont.).

[d] Multiply the ≤ 15-µm equation by this fraction to determine emissions, except as noted.
[e] Multiply the TSP predictive equation by this fraction to determine emissions.
[f] Blasting factor taken from a reexamination of field test data reported in Reference 1. See Reference 4.
[g] To estimate emissions from traffic on unpaved surfaces by vehicles such as haul trucks, light-to-medium duty vehicles, or scrapers in the travel mode, see the unpaved road emission factor equation in AP-42 Section 13.2.2
[h] Coal storage pile factor taken from Reference 5. To estimate emissions on a shorter time scale (e. g., worst-case day), see the procedure presented in Section 13.2.5.
[i] Rating applicable to mine types I, II, and IV (see Tables 11.9-5 and 11.9-6).

Note: Section 234 of the Clean Air Act of 1990 required EPA to review and revise the emission factors in this Section (and models used to evaluate ambient air quality impact), to ensure that they did not overestimate emissions from western surface coal mines. Due to resource and technical limitations, the haul road emission factors were isolated to receive the most attention during these studies, as the largest contributor to emissions. Resultant model evaluation with revised emission factors have improved model prediction for total suspended particulate (TSP); however, there is still a tendency for overprediction of particulate matter impact for PM-10, for as yet undetermined causes, prompting the Agency to make a policy decision not to use them for regulatory applications to these sources. However, the technical consideration exists that no better alternative data are currently available and the information should be made known. Users should accordingly use these factors with caution and awareness of their likely limitations.

Table 11.9-3 (Metric And English Units). TYPICAL VALUES FOR CORRECTION FACTORS APPLICABLE TO THE PREDICTIVE EMISSION FACTOR EQUATIONS[a]

Source	Correction Factor	Number Of Test Samples	Range	Geometric Mean	Units
Blasting	Area blasted	17	100 – 6,800	1,590	m^2
	Area blasted	17	1100 – 73,000	17,000	ft^2
Coal loading	Moisture	7	6.6 - 38	17.8	%
Bulldozers					
Coal	Moisture	3	4.0 - 22.0	10.4	%
	Silt	3	6.0 - 11.3	8.6	%
Overburden	Moisture	8	2.2 - 16.8	7.9	%
	Silt	8	3.8 - 15.1	6.9	%
Dragline	Drop distance	19	1.5 - 30	8.6	m
	Drop distance	19	5 - 100	28.1	ft
	Moisture	7	0.2 - 16.3	3.2	%
Scraper	Silt	10	7.2 - 25.2	16.4	%
	Weight	15	33 - 64	48.8	Mg
	Weight	15	36 - 70	53.8	ton
Grader	Speed	7	8.0 - 19.0	11.4	kph
	Speed		5.0 - 11.8	7.1	mph
Haul truck	Silt content	61	1.2 – 19.2	4.3	%
	Moisture	60	0.3 – 20.1	2.4	%
	Weight	61	20.9 – 260	110	mg
	Weight	61	23.0 – 290	120	ton

[a] Reference 1,6.

Table 11.9-4 (English And Metric Units). UNCONTROLLED PARTICULATE EMISSION FACTORS FOR OPEN DUST SOURCES AT WESTERN SURFACE COAL MINES

Source	Material	Mine Location[a]	TSP Emission Factor[b]	Units	EMISSION FACTOR RATING
Drilling	Overburden	Any	1.3 0.59	lb/hole kg/hole	C C
	Coal	V	0.22 0.10	lb/hole kg/hole	E E
Topsoil removal by scraper	Topsoil	Any	0.058 0.029	lb/ton kg/Mg	E E
		IV	0.44 0.22	lb/ton kg/Mg	E E
Overburden replacement	Overburden	Any	0.012 0.0060	lb/ton kg/Mg	C C
Truck loading by power shovel (batch drop)[c]	Overburden	V	0.037 0.018	lb/ton kg/Mg	E E
Train loading (batch or continuous drop)[c]	Coal	Any	0.028 0.014	lb/ton kg/Mg	E E
		III	0.0002 0.0001	lb/ton kg/Mg	E E
Bottom dump truck unloading (batch drop)[c]	Overburden	V	0.002 0.001	lb/ton kg/Mg	E E
	Coal	IV	0.027 0.014	lb/ton kg/Mg	E E
		III	0.005 0.002	lb/ton kg/Mg	E E
		II	0.020 0.010	lb/ton kg/Mg	E E
		I	0.014 0.0070	lb/T kg/Mg	E E
		Any	0.066 0.033	lb/T kg/Mg	D D

Table 11.9-4 (cont.).

Source	Material	Mine Location[a]	TSP Emission Factor[b]	Units	EMISSION FACTOR RATING
End dump truck unloading (batch drop)[c]	Coal	V	0.007 0.004	lb/T kg/Mg	E E
Scraper unloading (batch drop)[c]	Topsoil	IV	0.04 0.02	lb/T kg/Mg	E E
Wind erosion of exposed areas[d]	Seeded land, stripped overburden, graded overburden	Any	0.38 0.85	$\frac{T}{(acre)(yr)}$ $\frac{Mg}{(hectare)(yr)}$	C C

[a] Roman numerals I through V refer to specific mine locations for which the corresponding emission factors were developed (Reference 5). Tables 11.9-4 and 11.9-5 present characteristics of each of these mines. See text for correct use of these "mine-specific" emission factors. The other factors (from Reference 7, except for overburden drilling from Reference 1) can be applied to any western surface coal mine.

[b] Total suspended particulate (TSP) denotes what is measured by a standard high volume sampler (see Section 13.2).

[c] Predictive emission factor equations, which generally provide more accurate estimates of emissions, are presented in Chapter 13.

[d] To estimate wind erosion on a shorter time scale (e. g., worst-case day), see Section 13.2.5.

Table 11.9-5 (Metric And English Units). GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SURFACE COAL MINES REFERRED TO IN TABLE 11.9-4[a]

Mine	Location	Type Of Coal Mined	Terrain	Vegetative Cover	Surface Soil Type And Erodibility Index	Mean Wind Speed		Mean Annual Precipitation	
						m/s	mph	cm	in.
I	N.W. Colorado	Subbitum.	Moderately steep	Moderate, sagebrush	Clayey loamy (71)	2.3	5.1	38	15
II	S.W. Wyoming	Subbitum.	Semirugged	Sparse, sagebrush	Arid soil with clay and alkali or carbonate accumulation (86)	6.0	13.4	36	14
III	S.E. Montana	Subbitum.	Gently rolling to semirugged	Sparse, moderate, prairie grassland	Shallow clay loamy deposits on bedrock (47)	4.8	10.7	28 - 41	11 - 16
IV	Central North Dakota	Lignite	Gently rolling	Moderate, prairie grassland	Loamy, loamy to sandy (71)	5.0	11.2	43	17
V	N.E. Wyoming	Subbitum.	Flat to gently rolling	Sparse, sagebrush	Loamy, sandy, clayey, and clay loamy (102)	6.0	13.4	36	14

[a] Reference 4.

Table 11.9-6 (English Units). OPERATING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COAL MINES REFERRED TO IN TABLE 11.9-4[a]

Parameter	Required Information	Units	Mine I	Mine II	Mine III	Mine IV	Mine V
Production rate	Coal mined	10^6 ton/yr	1.13	5.0	9.5	3.8	12.0[b]
Coal transport	Avg. unit train frequency	per day	NA	NA	2	NA	2
Stratigraphic data	Overburden thickness	ft	21	80	90	65	35
	Overburden density	lb/yd^3	4000	3705	3000	ND	ND
	Coal seam thicknesses	ft	9,35	15,9	27	2,4,8	70
	Parting thicknesses	ft	50	15	NA	32,16	NA
	Spoils bulking factor	%	22	24	25	20	ND
	Active pit depth	ft	52	100	114	80	105
Coal analysis data	Moisture	%	10	18	24	38	30
	Ash	%, wet	8	10	8	7	6
	Sulfur	%, wet	0.46	0.59	0.75	0.65	0.48
	Heat content	Btu/lb	11000	9632	8628	8500	8020
Surface disposition	Total disturbed land	acre	168	1030	2112	1975	217
	Active pit	acre	34	202	87	ND	71
	Spoils	acre	57	326	144	ND	100
	Reclaimed	acre	100	221	950	ND	100
	Barren land	acre	ND	30	455	ND	ND
	Associated disturbances	acre	12	186	476	ND	46
Storage	Capacity	ton	NA	NA	ND	NA	48000
Blasting	Frequency, total	per week	4	4	3	7	7[b]
	Frequency, overburden	per week	3	0.5	3	NA	7[b]
	Area blasted, coal	ft^2	16000	40000	ND	30000	ND
	Area blasted, overburden	ft^2	20000	ND	ND	NA	ND

[a] Reference 5. NA = not applicable. ND = no data.
[b] Estimate.

11.9.3 Updates Since the Fifth Edition

The Fifth Edition which was released in January 1995 reformatted the section that was dated September 1988. Revisions to this section since these dates are summarized below. For further detail, consult the memoranda describing each supplement or the background report for this section. These and other documents can be found on the CHIEF WEB site (home page http://www.epa.gov/ttn/chief/).

Supplement E

- The predictive equations for emission factors for haul trucks and light/medium duty vehicles were removed and replaced with a footnote refering users to the recently revised unpaved road section in the Miscellaneous Sources chapter.

- The emission factor quality ratings were revised based upon a revised predictive equation and single value criteria.

- The typographical errors for the TSP equation and the omission of the PM-2.5 scaling factor for blasting were corrected.

References For Section 11.9

1. K. Axetell and C. Cowherd, *Improved Emission Factors For Fugitive Dust From Western Surface Coal Mining Sources*, 2 Volumes, EPA Contract No. 68-03-2924, U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Cincinnati, OH, July 1981.

2. *Reserve Base Of U. S. Coals By Sulfur Content: Part 2, The Western States*, IC8693, Bureau Of Mines, U. S. Department Of The Interior, Washington, DC, 1975.

3. *Bituminous Coal And Lignite Production And Mine Operations - 1978*, DOE/EIA-0118(78), U. S. Department Of Energy, Washington, DC, June 1980.

4. G. E. Muleski, *Update Of AP-42 Emission Factors For Western Surface Coal Mines And Related Sections*, Summary Report, Prepared for Emission Factors And Inventory Group (MD-14), Emissions, Modeling And Analysis Division, Office Of Air Quality, Planning, And Standards, U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Research Triangle Park, NC 27711.

5. K. Axetell, *Survey Of Fugitive Dust From Coal Mines*, EPA-908/1-78-003, U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Denver, CO, February 1978.

6. G. E. Muleski, *et al.*, *Surface Coal Mine Emission Factor Field Study*, EPA-454/R-95-010, U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Research Triangle Park, NC, January 1994.

7. D. L. Shearer, *et al.*, *Coal Mining Emission Factor Development And Modeling Study*, Amax Coal Company, Carter Mining Company, Sunoco Energy Development Company, Mobil Oil Corporation, and Atlantic Richfield Company, Denver, CO, July 1981.