

§258.74 Allowable Mechanism (July 1, 2010 Edition)

(e) Corporate Financial Test.

An owner or operator that satisfies the requirements of this paragraph (e) may demonstrate financial assurance up to the amount specified in this paragraph (e):

(1) Financial component. (i) The owner or operator must satisfy one of the following three conditions:

(A) A current rating for its senior unsubordinated debt of AAA, AA, A, or BBB as issued by Standard and Poor's or Aaa, Aa, A or Baa as issued by Moody's; or

(B) A ratio of less than 1.5 comparing total liabilities to net worth; or

(C) A ratio of greater than 0.10 comparing the sum of net income plus depreciation, depletion and amortization, minus \$10 million, to total liabilities.

(ii) The tangible net worth of the owner or operator must be greater than: (A) The sum of the current closure, post-closure care, corrective action cost estimates and any other environmental obligations, including guarantees, covered by a financial test plus \$10 million except as provided in paragraph (e)(1)(ii)(B) of this section.

(B) \$10 million in net worth plus the amount of any guarantees that have not been recognized as liabilities on the financial statements provided all of the current closure, post-closure care, and corrective action costs and any other environmental obligations covered by a financial test are recognized as liabilities on the owner's or operator's audited financial statements, and subject to the approval of the State Director.

(iii) The owner or operator must have assets located in the United States amounting to at least the sum of current closure, post-closure care, corrective action cost estimates and any other environmental obligations covered by a financial test as described in paragraph (e)(3) of this section.

(2) Recordkeeping and reporting requirements. (i) The owner or operator must place the following items into the facility's operating record:

(A) A letter signed by the owner's or operator's chief financial officer that:

(1) Lists all the current cost estimates covered by a financial test, including, but not limited to, cost estimates required for municipal solid waste management facilities under this part 258, cost estimates required for UIC facilities under 40 CFR part 144, if applicable, cost estimates required for petroleum underground storage tank facilities under 40 CFR part 280, if applicable, cost estimates required for PCB storage facilities under 40 CFR part 761, if applicable, and cost estimates required for hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facilities under 40 CFR parts 264 and 265, if applicable; and

(2) Provides evidence demonstrating that the firm meets the conditions of either paragraph (e)(1)(i)(A) or (e)(1)(i)(B) or (e)(1)(i)(C) of this section and paragraphs (e)(1)(ii) and (e)(1)(iii) of this section.

(B) A copy of the independent certified public accountant's unqualified opinion of the owner's or operator's financial statements for the latest completed fiscal year. To be eligible to use the financial test, the owner's or operator's financial statements must receive an unqualified opinion from the independent certified public accountant. An adverse opinion, disclaimer of opinion, or other qualified opinion will be cause for disallowance, with the potential exception for qualified opinions provided in the next sentence. The Director of an approved State may evaluate qualified opinions on a case-by-case basis and allow use of the financial test in cases where the Director deems that the matters which form the basis for the qualification are insufficient to warrant disallowance of the test. If the Director of an approved State does not allow use of the test, the owner or operator must provide alternate financial assurance that meets the requirements of this section.

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(C) If the chief financial officer's letter providing evidence of financial assurance includes financial data showing that owner or operator satisfies paragraph (e)(1)(i)(B) or (e)(1)(i)(C) of this section that are different from data in the audited financial statements referred to in paragraph (e)(2)(i)(B) of this section or any other audited financial statement or data filed with the SEC, then a special report from the owner's or operator's independent certified public accountant to the owner or operator is required. The special report shall be based upon an agreed upon procedures engagement in accordance with professional auditing standards and shall describe the procedures performed in comparing the data in the chief financial officer's letter derived from the independently audited, year-end financial statements for the latest fiscal year with the amounts in such financial statements, the findings of that comparison, and the reasons for any differences.

(D) If the chief financial officer's letter provides a demonstration that the firm has assured for environmental obligations as provided in paragraph (e)(1)(ii)(B) of this section, then the letter shall include a report from the independent certified public accountant that verifies that all of the environmental obligations covered by a financial test have been recognized as liabilities on the audited financial statements, how these obligations have been measured and reported, and that the tangible net worth of the firm is at least \$10 million plus the amount of any guarantees provided.

(ii) An owner or operator must place the items specified in paragraph (e)(2)(i) of this section in the operating record and notify the State Director that these items have been placed in the operating record before the initial receipt of waste or before the effective date of the requirements of this section (April 9, 1997 or October 9, 1997 for MSWLF units meeting the conditions of § 258.1(f)(1)), whichever is later in the case of closure, and post-closure care, or no later than 120 days after the corrective action remedy has been selected in accordance with the requirements of § 258.58.

(iii) After the initial placement of items specified in paragraph (e)(2)(i) of this section in the operating record, the owner or operator must annually update the information and place updated information in the operating record within 90 days following the close of the owner or operator's fiscal year. The Director of a State may provide up to an additional 45 days for an owner or operator who can demonstrate that 90 days is insufficient time to acquire audited financial statements. The updated information must consist of all items specified in paragraph (e)(2)(i) of this section.

(iv) The owner or operator is no longer required to submit the items specified in this paragraph (e)(2) or comply with the requirements of this paragraph (e) when:

(A) He substitutes alternate financial assurance as specified in this section that is not subject to these recordkeeping and reporting requirements; or

(B) He is released from the requirements of this section in accordance with § 258.71(b), § 258.72(b), or § 258.73(b).

(v) If the owner or operator no longer meets the requirements of paragraph (e)(1) of this section, the owner or operator must, within 120 days following the close of the owner or operator's fiscal year, obtain alternative financial assurance that meets the requirements of this section, place the required submissions for that assurance in the operating record, and notify the State Director that the owner or operator no longer meets the criteria of the financial test and that alternate assurance has been obtained.

(vi) The Director of an approved State may, based on a reasonable belief that the owner or operator may no longer meet the requirements of paragraph (e)(1) of this section, require at any time the owner or operator to provide reports of its financial condition in addition to or including current financial test documentation as specified in paragraph (e)(2) of this section. If the Director of an approved State finds that the owner or operator no longer meets the requirements of paragraph (e)(1) of this section, the owner or operator must provide alternate financial assurance that meets the requirements of this section.

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(e) *Corporate Financial Test.*

(3) *Calculation of costs to be assured.* When calculating the current cost estimates for closure, post-closure care, corrective action, or the sum of the combination of such costs to be covered, and any other environmental obligations assured by a financial test referred to in this paragraph (e), the owner or operator must include cost estimates required for municipal solid waste management facilities under this part, as well as cost estimates required for the following environmental obligations, if it assures them through a financial test: obligations associated with UIC facilities under 40 CFR part 144, petroleum underground storage tank facilities under 40 CFR part 280, PCB storage facilities under 40 CFR part 761, and hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facilities under 40 CFR parts 264 and 265.

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(g) Corporate Guarantee.

(1) An owner or operator may meet the requirements of this section by obtaining a written guarantee. The guarantor must be the direct or higher-tier parent corporation of the owner or operator, a firm whose parent corporation is also the parent corporation of the owner or operator, or a firm with a "substantial business relationship" with the owner or operator. The guarantor must meet the requirements for owners or operators in paragraph (e) of this section and must comply with the terms of the guarantee. A certified copy of the guarantee must be placed in the facility's operating record along with copies of the letter from the guarantor's chief financial officer and accountants' opinions. If the guarantor's parent corporation is also the parent corporation of the owner or operator, the letter from the guarantor's chief financial officer must describe the value received in consideration of the guarantee. If the guarantor is a firm with a "substantial business relationship" with the owner or operator, this letter must describe this "substantial business relationship" and the value received in consideration of the guarantee.

(2) The guarantee must be effective and all required submissions placed in the operating record before the initial receipt of waste or before the effective date of the requirements of this section (April 9, 1997 or October 9, 1997 for MSWLF units meeting the conditions of § 258.1(f)(1), whichever is later, in the case of closure and post-closure care, or in the case of corrective action no later than 120 days after the corrective action remedy has been selected in accordance with the requirements of § 258.58.

(3) The terms of the guarantee must provide that: (i) If the owner or operator fails to perform closure, post-closure care, and/or corrective action of a facility covered by the guarantee, the guarantor will: (A) Perform, or pay a third party to perform, closure, post-closure care, and/or corrective action as required (performance guarantee); or (B) Establish a fully funded trust fund as specified in paragraph (a) of this section in the name of the owner or operator (payment guarantee). (ii) The guarantee will remain in force for as long as the owner or operator must comply with the applicable financial assurance requirements of this Subpart unless the guarantor sends prior notice of cancellation by certified mail to the owner or operator and to the State Director. Cancellation may not occur, however, during the 120 days beginning on the date of receipt of the notice of cancellation by both the owner or operator and the State Director, as evidenced by the return receipts. (iii) If notice of cancellation is given, the owner or operator must, within 90 days following receipt of the cancellation notice by the owner or operator and the State Director, obtain alternate financial assurance, place evidence of that alternate financial assurance in the facility operating record, and notify the State Director. If the owner or operator fails to provide alternate financial assurance within the 90-day period, the guarantor must provide that alternate assurance within 120 days of the cancellation notice, obtain alternative assurance, place evidence of the alternate assurance in the facility operating record, and notify the State Director.

(4) If a corporate guarantor no longer meets the requirements of paragraph (e)(1) of this section, the owner or operator must, within 90 days, obtain alternative assurance, place evidence of the alternate assurance in the facility operating record, and notify the State Director. If the owner or operator fails to provide alternate financial assurance within the 90-day period, the guarantor must provide that alternate assurance within the next 30 days.

(5) The owner or operator is no longer required to meet the requirements of this paragraph (g) when: (i) The owner or operator substitutes alternate financial assurance as specified in this section; or (ii) The owner or operator is released from the requirements of this section in accordance with § 258.71(b), § 258.72(b), or § 258.73(b).