

West Virginia Legislature Enacts Renewable Energy Site Reclamation Law

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(By **Christopher (Kip) Power**)



In an effort to ensure that owners of solar and wind energy facilities (“renewable energy facilities”) do not decommission production facilities without completing proper reclamation, on April 10, 2021, the West Virginia Legislature enacted Senate Bill 492, creating the West Virginia Wind and Solar Energy Facility Reclamation Act (as new Article 32 of Chapter 22 of the West Virginia Code (“Reclamation Act”). The Reclamation Act (effective July 9, 2021) generally requires that an owner of a wind generation facility or a solar generation facility submit certain information to the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (“DEP”), including the date the facility commenced operation; a proposed decommissioning plan (prepared by a “qualified independent licensed professional engineer”); and a cost estimate for execution of that plan. The DEP will use that and other relevant information in preparing (or approving) a decommissioning plan for the site and in determining an appropriate reclamation bond amount for the facility.

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