required to be performed on these samples.

The examination must be made at least once in each designated period during daylight hours unless there is insufficient rainfall or snow-melt to produce a runoff. Whenever practicable, the same individual should carry out the collection and examination of discharges throughout the life of the permit to ensure the greatest degree of consistency possible. Examinations shall be conducted in each of the following periods for the purposes of visually inspecting storm water quality associated with storm water runoff and snow melt: January through March; April through June; July through September; October through December. Grab samples shall be collected within the first 30 minutes (or as soon thereafter as practical, but not to exceed 60 minutes) of when the runoff begins discharging. Reports of the visual examination include: the examination date and time, examination personnel, visual quality of the storm water discharge, and probable sources of any observed storm water contamination. The visual examination reports must be maintained onsite with the pollution prevention plan.

EPA realizes that if a facility is inactive and unstaffed it may be difficult to collect storm water discharge samples when a qualifying event occurs. Today's final permit has been revised so that inactive, unstaffed facilities can exercise a waiver of the requirement to conduct quarterly visual examination.

EPA believes that this quick and simple assessment will help the permittee to determine the effectiveness of his/her plan on a regular basis at very little cost. Although the visual examination cannot assess the chemical properties of the storm water discharged from the site, the examination will provide meaningful results upon which the facility may act quickly. The frequency of this visual examination will also allow for timely adjustments to be made to the plan. If BMPs are performing ineffectively, corrective action must be implemented. A set of tracking or follow-up procedures must be used to ensure that appropriate actions are taken in response to the examinations. The visual examination is intended to be performed by members of the pollution prevention team. This hands-on examination will enhance the staff's understanding of the storm water problems on that site and the effects of the management practices that are included in the plan.

When a discharger is unable to collect samples over the course of the visual examination period as a result of adverse climatic conditions, the discharger must document the reason for not performing the visual examination and retain this documentation onsite with the records of the visual examination. Adverse weather conditions which may prohibit the collection of samples include weather conditions that create dangerous conditions for personnel (such as local flooding, high winds, hurricane, tornadoes, electrical storms, etc.) or otherwise make the collection of a sample impracticable (drought, extended frozen conditions, etc.).

As discussed above, EPA does not believe that chemical monitoring is necessary for oil and gas facilities. EPA believes that between quarterly visual examinations and site compliance evaluations potential sources of contaminants can be recognized, addressed, and then controlled with BMPs. In determining the monitoring requirements, EPA considered the nature of the industrial activities and significant materials exposed at these sites, and performed a review of data provided in Part 2 group applications.

J. Storm Water Discharges Associated With Industrial Activity From Mineral Mining and Processing Facilities

1. Industry Profile

On November 16, 1990 (55 FR 47990), EPA promulgated the regulatory definition of "storm water discharges associated with industrial activity. This definition included point source discharges of storm water from eleven major categories of facilities, including: "* * * (iii) facilities classified as Standard Industrial Classifications 10 through 14 (mineral industry) including active or inactive mining operations (except for areas of coal mining operations no longer meeting the definition of a reclamation area under 40 CFR 434.11(l) because the performance bond issued to the facility by the appropriate SMCRA authority has been released, or except for areas of noncoal mining operations which have been released from applicable State or Federal reclamation requirements after December 17, 1990) and oil and gas exploration, production, processing, or treatment operations, or storm water contaminated by contact with, any overburden, raw material, intermediate products, finished products, byproducts or waste products located on the site of such operations.'

This section only covers storm water discharges associated with industrial activities from active and inactive mineral mining and processing facilities. Mineral mining and

processing facilities eligible to seek coverage under this section include the following types of operations: Dimension Stone (SIC Code 1411); Crushed and Broken Limestone (SIC Code 1422); Crushed and Broken Granite (SIC Code 1423); Crushed and Broken Stone (SIC Code 1429); Construction Sand and Gravel (SIC Code 1442); Industrial Sand and Gravel (SIC Code 1446); Kaolin and Ball Clay (SIC Code 1455); Clay, Ceramic, and Refractory Minerals (SIC Code 1459); Potash, Soda, and Borate Minerals (SIC Code 1474); Phosphate Rock (SIC Code 1475); Chemical and Fertilizer Mineral Mining (SIC Code 1479); and Miscellaneous Nonmetallic Minerals, Except Fuels (SIC Code 1499).

Storm water discharges covered by this section include all discharges where precipitation and storm water runon come into contact with significant materials including, but not limited to, raw materials, waste products, by-products, overburden, stored materials, and fuels. This includes storm water discharges from haul roads, access roads, and rail lines used or traveled by carriers of raw materials, manufactured products, waste materials, or by-products created by the facility.

This permit may authorize storm water discharges associated with industrial activity that are mixed with storm water discharges associated with industrial activity from construction activities, provided that the storm water discharge from the construction activity is in compliance with the terms, including applicable Notice of Intent (NOI) or application requirements, of a different NPDES general permit or individual permit authorizing such discharges.

This section does not cover any discharge subject to effluent limitation guidelines, unless otherwise specified, including storm water that combines with process wastewater. Storm water that does not come into contact with any overburden, raw material, intermediate product, finished product, by-product, or waste product located on the site of the operation are not subject to permitting under this section according to Section 402(l)(2) of the Clean Water Act. Today's permit contains additional coverage provisions applicable only to mineral mining and processing facilities located in Region VI and Region IX (the States of Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas and Arizona). Mine dewatering discharges, which are composed entirely of storm water or ground water seepage, and that are not commingled with any process waste water from