

Following the successful Coal Authority Stakeholder Engagement Workshops that the British Drilling Association supported, along with the Health and Safety Executive, it has become apparent that awareness of the Borehole Sites and Operations Regulations (1995) needs to be increased within the UK land drilling industry. The regulations lay out a number of legal requirements for contractors engaging in land drilling for a multitude of purposes. Included in those is the requirement for reporting of borehole drilling activities to the HSE, should certain conditions be met.

Table 1, taken from the Guidance on Regulations L71 document (available [here](#)) is given below.

Table 1 Application of Regulations

<i>Proposed work activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Borehole depth</i>	<i>Is this a borehole operation?</i>	<i>Which regulations apply</i>
Prospecting for or extraction of oil, gas or coal bed methane by borehole	Anywhere	Any	Yes	All except 6(2), (3) and (4)
Prospecting for other minerals with a view to extraction by mining	Anywhere	Any	Yes	All except 6(1) and (3)
Prospecting for other minerals with a view to extraction by means other than mining (eg by quarrying, opencast mining or solution mining through the borehole)	Inside a mining area	30 metres or more	Yes	All except 6(1), (2) and (4)
		Less than 30 metres	Yes	All except 6
	Outside a mining area	Any	Yes	All except 6
Extraction of other minerals by borehole	Inside a mining area	30 metres or more	Yes	All except 6(1), (2) and (4)
		Less than 30 metres	Yes	All except 6
	Outside a mining area	Any	Yes	All except 6
Drilling of a borehole for any other purpose	Inside a mining area	30 metres or more	No	6(3) and (5) only
		Less than 30 metres	No	None
	Outside a mining area	Any	No	None

To provide clarity for our membership, the BDA would like to provide the following guidance:

With regards to the applicability of these regulations, “mining area” means land:

- within one kilometre, in a horizontal or other direction, of the workings in a mine (whether disused or not)
- In relation to which a licence to mine for minerals has been granted.

This means that if you are drilling any form of borehole inside a mining area that you know will, or during the course of works changing, does, progress deeper than 30 metres, you must notify the HSE.

Details on the location of mining areas should be contained within the PCI information or highlighted within any Desk Study performed prior to intrusive activities being undertaken.

An F10 or Coal Authority permit does not count as notification of activities for this regulation – contact must be made directly with the HSE.

Notification should be sent to Sheffield-ed.admin@hse.gov.uk with as much information on the borehole(s) as possible. The HSE will acknowledge receipt of the email but may not provide further correspondence.

More detailed guidance is available from the Association of Geotechnical and Geoenvironmental Specialists (AGS), who have a published guidance document that can be accessed from their website, here: [AGS – Association of Geotechnical and Geoenvironmental Specialists – Guidance on the Borehole Sites and Operations Regulations](#)