Dam Safety Inspection and Audit Results for 2018

Alberta Energy Regulator

In 2018, we conducted 61 inspections of tailings and water ponds and their dams. We inspect these structures to ensure that they are designed, constructed, operated, maintained, and decommissioned safely, and that the owners are prepared to respond in the event of an emergency.

We also did five audits of the dam safety management systems of Syncrude, Suncor Energy, Imperial Oil, Canadian Natural Upgrading Limited, and Canadian Natural Resources Limited as part of our periodic audit of dam owners.

We may discover a noncompliance during an inspection, or the dam owner may disclose a noncompliance to us. In either case, we issue a notice to the owner. The owner takes action to resolve the noncompliance and then notifies us. In 2018, one noncompliance was found during an inspection and four others, all in the oil sands sector, were disclosed to us. None of the noncompliances posed a significant risk. Notices of noncompliance were sent to the owners, and the noncompliances were resolved.

Inspections

Sector	# of inspections that found at least one noncompliance	# of inspections that found no noncompliances	Total
Oil sands	1	37	38
Coal	0	21	21
Oil and gas	0	2	2
Total	**1**	**60**	**61**

Audits

Sector	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	Total
Oil sands	5	0	0	0	0	0
Coal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oil and gas	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**5**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Understanding the audit categories

Very good – the dam owner's dam safety management system (DSMS) is fully documented and implemented. No action is required.

Good – the dam owner's DSMS is largely documented and largely implemented. Minor action is required to fully document and implement.

Fair – the dam owner's DSMS has gaps in documentation and implementation. Action is required to fully document and implement.

Poor – the dam owner's DSMS is poorly documented and poorly implemented. Significant action is required, without delay, to fully document and implement.

Very poor – the dam owner's DSMS does not exist or is non-functioning. Major action is required, without delay, to document and implement.