

## Explosives

Explosives deteriorate with age and become unstable. A slight bump, excessive heat, or just handling may set them off and may cause a serious injury or death. Blasting caps, resembling a firecracker with wires, are sometimes found on the ground and, if stepped on, will explode.



Never Handle Explosives or Blasting Caps

## Signs are for YOUR safety!

Remember, warning signs should be taken seriously. However, most abandoned mine hazards have no warning signs or fences around them and the hazards are not always apparent. In addition, trespassing or exploring an abandoned mine is a violation of property rights just like walking into someone's yard or home without their permission. You can download No Trespassing signs and posters at [www.depweb.state.pa.us](http://www.depweb.state.pa.us), keyword: Mine Safety.

Be wise...

**Stay Out! Stay Alive!**



Mine Shafts Can be Hundreds of Feet Deep

## Stay Out! Stay Alive!

To report the location of an abandoned mine or to schedule a Stay Out/Stay Alive presentation for your local school or community organization, please contact DEP's Bureau of Mine Safety at:

**724-439-7469 - Uniontown**

**570-621-3139 - Pottsville**

You can view, download and print publications online at [www.depweb.state.pa.us](http://www.depweb.state.pa.us), keyword: Stay Out Stay Alive.

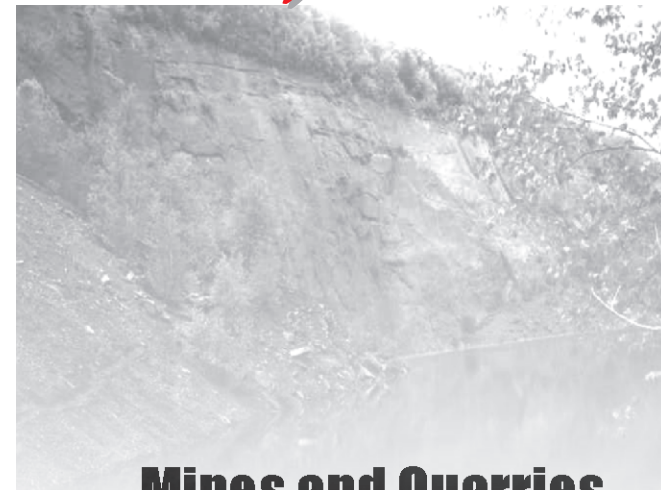


**Bureau of Mine Safety  
Fayette County Health Center  
100 New Salem Road, Room 167  
Uniontown, PA 15401**

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
Edward G. Rendell, Governor  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
Kathleen A. McGinty, Secretary

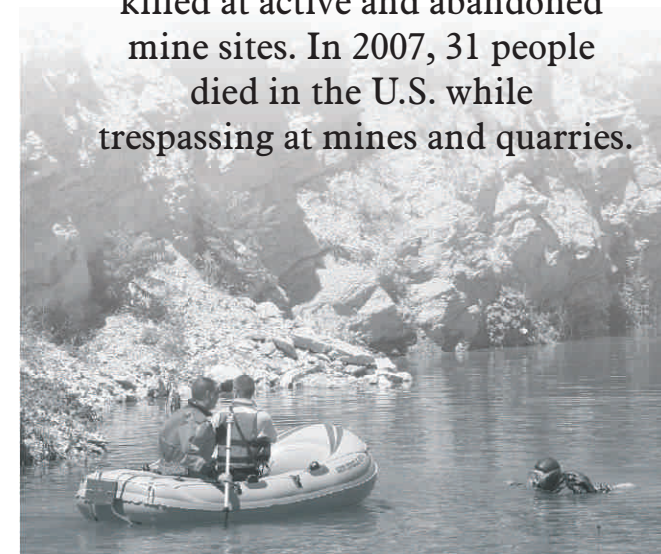
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# Stay Out! Stay Alive!



## Mines and Quarries Are Not Playgrounds. They Can Kill You.

Every year, dozens are injured or killed at active and abandoned mine sites. In 2007, 31 people died in the U.S. while trespassing at mines and quarries.



# Abandoned Mines and Quarries Can Be

# DEADLY!

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has partnered with the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration, other state agencies, and the mining industry to promote the “Stay Out! Stay Alive!” campaign. The goal of this nationwide effort is to educate the public, particularly young people, about the dangers of abandoned and active mines. DEP is visiting schools and community groups to discuss the dangers of these sites.

Pennsylvania is home to approximately 250,000 acres of abandoned mine lands as a result of decades of unregulated mining. Years ago, before modern environmental regulations, mine operators were not required to return the land to its original condition (or reclaim it) after mining was completed. As a result, there are open mine shafts, large water-filled pits, and other hazards throughout the state.



Abandoned Equipment is Dangerous

DEP and the modern mining industry are working to correct these problems, but it is a difficult challenge. The cost to reclaim all of Pennsylvania's abandoned mines is estimated at \$15 billion. Though there are many efforts underway to reclaim these abandoned sites, Pennsylvania is still faced with a significant public safety liability.

## Abandoned Quarries

Abandoned quarries can be attractive to the curious, but swimming and exploring can lead to tragic results. Many times these water-filled pits become popular places to swim. Water in a quarry could be hundreds of feet deep and very cold, even on a hot summer day. The jagged rocks hidden underwater make diving very dangerous, and the steep cliffs surrounding the water make it very difficult for swimmers to escape.

**Stay Out! Stay Alive!**

## Abandoned Mines

Abandoned mine openings may be unmarked or unprotected at the surface and can be hundreds of feet deep. They may be obscured by vegetative overgrowth or they could be covered by decayed and rotten boards that give way under the slightest weight. Even when a mine opening is clearly visible, walking close to it is very dangerous because the decomposed rock at the top can suddenly cave in.

Abandoned horizontal mine openings leading into underground tunnels may seem safe and sturdy to the untrained person, but are prone to cave in. They contain many hazards such as rotten roof support beams, deadly odorless gases, poisonous snakes, vertical shafts in the tunnel floors, and flooded sections. Darkness and sharp objects hanging from the roof add to these underground mine hazards.



Abandoned Slope Mine Opening

## Be Wise-

**Stay Out! Stay Alive!**



Fences don't always keep people out!

## ATV / Off-Road Vehicles, Snowmobiles, and Bikes

The increasing popularity of off-road recreation is bringing more people into contact with abandoned mines in Pennsylvania. As a result, there have been many serious injuries and deaths reported from accidents involving all-terrain vehicles, off-road vehicles, snowmobiles, motorcycles and 4-wheel drive vehicles over the past few years.

Many accidents are the result of loss of control in unfamiliar surroundings, leading to flip-over and roll-over when riders suddenly encounter a hole, obstruction or change in terrain.

Although abandoned mine lands may appear to be an inviting off-road challenge, there are a number of deadly hidden dangers. Excavated vertical cliffs (highwalls) in open pit mines and quarries can be unstable and prone to collapse. Hills of loose material in stockpiles or refuse heaps can easily collapse, burying an unsuspecting biker or climber. Mine shafts and portals are often unmarked and hidden by vegetation or debris. Warning signs may be missing, and fences may be vandalized, leaving the rider unaware of dangers that lie directly ahead.