



DIVISIONS  
ENERGY  
GAS AND OIL  
GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES  
MINED LAND RECLAMATION  
MINERAL MINING  
MINES  
ADMINISTRATION

# COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

## *Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy*

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### Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy Performing Inventory of Mine Features in Richmond Coalfield

**RICHMOND** – State geologists will soon be contacting home and property owners in the Richmond Coalfield area as the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) conducts a field inventory to collect information on old coal mine sites. The inventory is being performed to add information about mine site locations to a web-based geographic information system (GIS) that is available to county governments and private citizens. The Richmond Coalfield includes portions of Goochland, Henrico, Powhatan, Chesterfield, and Amelia counties.

Commercial mining in the Richmond Coalfield dates back to 1748. Over the next 200 years, hundreds of drill holes, shafts, slopes, and open pit mines were developed. Much knowledge has been gained over time about the coalfield. This information is contained in a 1988 publication published by DMME's Division of Geology and Mineral Resources and authored by DMME geologist Gerald P. Wilkes. However, as residential and commercial growth continues in the area, more features are being discovered, often causing problems.

When these problems occur, the DMME, working in cooperation with the counties, has responded to address citizen concerns of subsidence on their property and to oversee reclamation of the problems. The upcoming field inventory, which will be conducted by Wilkes and other DMME geologists, will provide the agency, local governments and citizens with an updated picture of the extent of past mining in the Richmond coalfield. The geologists will attempt to contact property and homeowners in advance about their visits whenever possible.

DMME's Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Program, which is administered by the agency's Division of Mined Land Reclamation, oversees the reclamation of Virginia's abandoned coal mine sites mined prior to August 3, 1977, the date of passage of the Federal Surface Mining

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Control and Reclamation Act. Taxes on coal mined are paid by the coal industry into the federally managed AML Fund and then returned to state regulatory programs to reclaim the abandoned mines. AML features that pose the greatest threat to public health and safety are given the highest priority for reclamation.

Anyone having questions about the field inventory may contact Gerald Wilkes, DMLR, 900 Natural Resources Drive, Suite 400, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903; (434) 951-6364; [gerald.wilkes@dmme.virginia.gov](mailto:gerald.wilkes@dmme.virginia.gov) or Richard Davis, DMLR, P.O. Drawer 900, Big Stone Gap, VA 24219; (276) 523-8216; [Richard.davis@dmme.virginia.gov](mailto:Richard.davis@dmme.virginia.gov).

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