



The More You Know, The Less Gold Glows

Frequently Asked Questions about the No Dirty Gold campaign's *New York Times* ad

Q. What is the No Dirty Gold campaign?

A. The No Dirty Gold campaign is working to educate consumers, retailers, and the general public about the impacts of irresponsible gold mining, and to enlist their support to reform harmful mining practices. The campaign is not calling for a boycott of gold. It is calling on the mining industry to provide alternatives to irresponsibly mined gold, which today is too often produced at the expense of communities, workers, and the environment. We value clean water and land, healthy communities, human rights, and a safe environment. We are calling on retailers and consumers to demand changes in mining practices that will protect these precious rights and resources.

Q. Why is the No Dirty Gold campaign commending certain firms in its *New York Times* ad? Which firms do you consider "Leaders?"

A. The No Dirty Gold campaign has run a full-page [ad](#) in the *New York Times* recognizing the leadership of eight retail firms – Zale Corp., the Signet Group (the parent firm of Sterling and Kay Jewelers), Tiffany & Co., Helzberg Diamonds, Fortunoff, Cartier, Piaget, and Van Cleef & Arpels. These "Leaders" have made in-principle commitments to the Golden Rules, which are criteria for more responsible mining. These companies have agreed to actively work within their companies and with their suppliers and vendors to track the sources of their gold. They have also committed to sourcing from operations that respect social, human rights, and environmental standards in gold production, when such independently verified sources become available. By doing so, these retailers are signaling to the mining industry that there is a demand for more responsibly produced gold from the sector that is the largest user of gold—just as tens of thousands of individual consumers have already done over the last two years. (The jewelry sector accounts for more than 80 percent of gold consumption.)

Specifically, these firms have made a commitment to working to source increasing percentages of their gold from mining operations that:

- Respect basic human rights
- Obtain the free, prior, informed consent of affected communities
- Respect workers' rights and labor standards
- Do not dump mine wastes into the ocean, rivers, lakes, or streams at new mines
- Do not contribute to armed or militarized conflict
- Do not threaten protected areas or areas of high conservation or ecological value
- Do not force communities off their lands at new or expanded mines
- Do not produce uncontrolled sulfuric acid
- Provide financial guarantee for clean-up and mine closure costs

The firms also support the development of an independent, third party system to allow for the verification of the above principles.



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Q. Why are certain firms listed as "Laggards"?

A. In its *New York Times* ad, the No Dirty Gold campaign identifies eight firms-- Rolex, JCPenney, Wal-Mart, Fred Meyer Jewelers, Whitehall Jewellers, Jostens, QVC, and Sears/Kmart—as "lagging behind" on commitments to responsible gold sourcing. Despite more than 2 years of outreach, these companies have remained silent on the issue of more responsible sourcing of gold. Since February 2004, the No Dirty Gold campaign has sent numerous letters to these companies sharing our concerns about the serious human rights and environmental problems associated with gold mining, and asking for commitments to more responsible sourcing.

We remain optimistic that these firms and others will take a stand on more responsible sourcing by signing on to the Golden Rules. By doing so, they would be joining some of the world's leading retailers of jewelry who have already endorsed these social, human rights, and environmental criteria for more responsible gold production.

For more information, [read the letter sent by the No Dirty Gold campaign](#) to laggard firms the day the *New York Times* ad was published.

Q. How did the No Dirty Gold campaign come up with the 20 tons of waste statistic?

A. The No Dirty Gold campaign has estimated that producing the gold used to make one wedding band generates on average 20 tons of waste. This estimate is for an 18-karat gold ring weighing one-third of an ounce. It is based on publicly available data obtained from sources such as the US Geological Survey and on data that mining companies report to their shareholders. Gold-to-waste ratios can vary significantly depending on the type of mine (underground or open-pit) and type of ore deposit. The 20 tons statistic is a global average based on data from mines around the world.

The full explanation of how the 20 tons statistic was calculated can be found in this fact sheet: http://www.nodirtygold.org/pubs/20TonsMemo_FINAL.pdf

Q. Where were the photos in the ad taken?

A. The photo on the left is of the Crowfoot/Hycroft gold mine in Nevada. It shows the heap-leach pad where ore was piled and then sprayed with cyanide to extract the gold. This method, known as cyanide heap-leaching, is commonly used to extract gold at open-pit mines. Gold production at the Crowfoot/Hycroft mine ended in 2002 but this photo is a good representation of a typical cyanide heap-leach mine.

The photo on the right is of an open-pit gold mine in Watsa, in the northeastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Some of the mines in this gold-rich area are operated by small-scale miners and are controlled by armed rebel groups and the Ugandan and Rwandan militaries. These groups have been implicated in widespread human rights abuse. Gold from these mines has been funneled out of the Democratic Republic of Congo and into the world market. One of the world's largest gold mining companies has been doing exploration in this conflict area and has provided logistical and financial support to armed groups that have committed human rights violations.