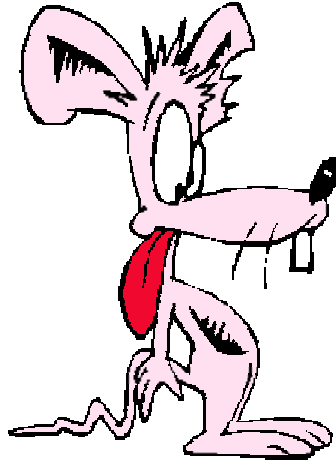


MINERAL  
POLICY  
C E N T E R

*Protecting  
Communities  
and the  
Environment*

# BRINGS NEW MEANING TO THE TERM “RAT RACE!”

**1872 Mining Law Fact #7:**



Arsenic is so powerfully toxic—even in small doses—that it was commonly used as rat poison in our country for more than a century.

Today this same poison is dumped onto public lands by many modern hardrock mining operations. The Environmental Protection Agency reports that in 2000, mining for minerals such as gold, silver and copper released 454 million pounds of arsenic—that’s enough to kill more than 20 trillion rats.

Arsenic consumed by humans can cause cancer of the bladder, liver and skin, according to the National Academy of Sciences. Arsenic is associated with birth defects, as well as damage to the human heart, blood vessels and nervous system.

Yet there are no environmental standards for hardrock mining under the 1872 Mining Law. That should send any rat racing – along with the rest of us.

1612 K Street, NW  
Suite 808  
Washington, D.C.  
20006

Telephone:  
202.887.1872

Fax:  
202.887.1875

Email:  
mpc@mineralpolicy.org

Website:  
www.mineralpolicy.org

*Part of a series on the 1872 Mining Law, highlighting impacts on taxpayers, community health, and water resources—and the need for meaningful reform.*

*For more information contact Lexi Shultz at (202) 887-1872 x 212.*

*March 27, 2003*