



MINERAL
POLICY

C E N T E R

*Protecting
Communities
and the
Environment*

CLEAN UP THAT MESS WHEN YOU'RE DONE

1872 Mining Law Fact #18:



Dear ol' Mom would be shocked by America's abandoned mine messes, some of which date back more than a century.

Old mine sites—like those where gold, silver and copper were mined in the past—pose significant public safety risks.

At least 120 people have died at abandoned mine sites in the past four years due to falling, drowning and gas poisoning, according to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Open shafts, unstable rock, decayed support structures, deadly gasses, lack of oxygen, exposure to explosives and toxic chemicals comprise the BLM's official list of major abandoned mine dangers.

More than 500,000 abandoned hardrock mines litter the U.S., yet the 1872 Mining Law requires *absolutely no cleanup* or responsibility for these sites.

Mom wouldn't be the only one disapproving of that.

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

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