
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2008EMPR0001-000034
Jan. 15, 2008

Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

B.C. UPHOLDS ITS COMMITMENT TO MINE SAFETY

VICTORIA – The Province released the best practices guidebook *Health & Safety: A Practical Guide for Aggregate Operations* to enhance the health and safety of workers at British Columbia’s aggregate mining operations, Minister of State for Mining Kevin Krueger announced.

“B.C. has long been a world-leader in mine safety and we want to ensure that we uphold this reputation and keep all mines, including quarries, safe,” said Krueger. “This guidebook will provide some useful and practical guidelines to assist workers, supervisors, and managers, in the aggregate industry to maintain the safest and healthiest possible work environments in this growing industry. While mining is one of the safest heavy industries in B.C., constant vigilance is necessary to avoid accidents and prevent tragedies.”

“We believe the guidebook is a good start to raising the profile of safety and safe operating practices for aggregate operations in British Columbia for all companies, big or small,” said Brad Kohl, president of the Aggregate Producers Association of British Columbia. “We are concerned for the safety of each and every worker on our sites and we welcome the opportunity to work with the ministry to make sure each worker has a safe work environment and makes it home safely each day to their families.”

In recognition of increased aggregate activity in the province, the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources has developed a comprehensive prevention strategy, which includes the guidebook. The goal is to improve the health and safety at aggregate mines across the province.

As part of the prevention strategy, the ministry has issued a directive to the Aggregate industry to substantiate that all new workers have received appropriate orientation and training. As well, the ministry is developing a health, safety and operational skills program that has been used with great success in the construction industry. The ministry also continues to conduct on-site mine inspections, investigate accidents and also do audits of mines to ensure continuous health and safety of workers.

The mining industry in B.C. has continually improved its health and safety practices and the Province is increasing the number of inspectors in the field. These inspectors are mine safety experts and their involvement in mine development is key to ensuring that all mines are working in a safe manner.

One of the four cornerstones of the British Columbia Mining Plan is the commitment to uphold and build on B.C.'s strong environmental and safety standards.

Media Jake Jacobs
contact: Public Affairs Officer
 Ministry of Energy, Mines and
 250 952-0628
 250 213-6934 (cell)

For more information on government services or to subscribe to the Province's news feeds using RSS, visit the Province's website at www.gov.bc.ca.