



# COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

## Virginia Department of Energy

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[www.energy.virginia.gov](http://www.energy.virginia.gov)

### **COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM - NO. 01 - 2024**

**TO:** All Licensed Operators  
**FROM:** James P. Skorupa, Director  
**DATE:** May 2, 2024  
**SUBJECT:** Reporting of Accidents

The Virginia Department of Energy's Mineral Mining Program has had numerous cases where mine operators failed to report accidents that have occurred at a mine as required by the [Mineral Mine Safety Act § 45.2- 1145.A](#) or not reported them in the timeframe established by the [Virginia Safety and Health Regulations for Mineral Mining § 4VAC 25-40-50](#).

The purpose of this Communication Memorandum is to remind all operators of the applicable sections of the laws and regulations about what is an "accident" or a "serious personal injury", as well as when and how to report the incident.

The [Mineral Mine Safety Act § 45.2- 1145.A](#) requires the following:

*"Each operator shall report promptly to the Department the occurrence at any mine of any accident involving serious personal injury or death to any person, whether employed in the mine or not. The scene of the accident shall not be disturbed pending an investigation, except to prevent the suspension of use of a slope, entry, or facility vital to the operation of a section or a mine. In any case in which reasonable doubt exists as to whether to leave the scene unchanged, the operator shall secure prior approval from the Department before any change is made."*

The [Mineral Mine Safety Act § 45.2- 1101](#) defines:

*"'Accident' means (i) a death of an individual at a mine; (ii) a serious personal injury; (iii) an entrapment of an individual for more than 30 minutes; (iv) an unplanned inundation of a mine by liquid or gas; (v) an unplanned ignition or explosion of gas or dust; (vi) an unplanned mine fire not extinguished within 30 minutes of discovery; (vii) an unplanned ignition or explosion of a blasting agent or an explosive; (viii) an unplanned roof fall at or above the anchorage zone in active workings where roof bolts are in use, or an unplanned roof or rib fall in active workings that impairs ventilation or impedes passage; (ix) a rock outburst that causes withdrawal of miners or that*

*disrupts regular mining activity for more than one hour; (x) an unstable condition at a water or silt retaining dam or mine refuse pile that requires emergency action in order to prevent failure or causes individuals to evacuate an area, or failure of such retaining dam or refuse pile; (xi) damage to hoisting equipment in a shaft or slope that endangers an individual or interferes with use of the equipment for more than 30 minutes; and (xii) an event at a mine that causes death or serious personal injury to any individual not at a mine at the time the event occurs.”*

The [Mineral Mine Safety Act § 45.2- 1101](#) also further defines:

*“‘Serious personal injury’ means any injury that (i) has a reasonable potential to cause death or (ii) is other than a sprain or strain and requires an admission to a hospital for 24 hours or more for medical treatment.”*

The [Virginia Safety and Health Regulations for Mineral Mining § 4VAC 25-40-50](#) states:

*A. “Operators shall report any accident involving serious personal injury or death to any person on the mine property to the division by the quickest available means, and the scene of the accident shall not be disturbed until an investigation is conducted by the division. For accidents where the injured person is transported to a hospital, but confinement is not expected, the operator may either preserve the scene or collect relevant physical data and photographs as specified by the division. The division shall be notified immediately upon learning that the injured person has been admitted to the hospital for medical treatment. Head injuries that result in loss of consciousness at the site shall be reported immediately.*

*B. Operators shall report all other accidents and occupational injuries to the division within 10 days of their occurrence. Operators shall keep on file a report of all accidents and occupational injuries occurring on the mine property for review by the division mine inspector. Such records shall be kept for three years.”*

Summarizing the above:

- **All accidents as defined by § 45.2- 1101 shall be reported promptly to the Division of Mineral Mining.**
- **The death of a person or a serious personal injury shall be reported by the quickest means available.**
- **Head injuries that result in loss of consciousness at the site shall be reported immediately.**
- **All accidents and serious personal injury accidents that require prompt, immediate, or quickest available requires shall be reported the directly to a Mineral Mining staff member. Voice mail messages, texts, or emails are not acceptable.**
- **Accidents or occupational injuries that require doctor’s treatment but do not meet the definition of Serious Personal Injury shall be reported to the division within 10 days of their occurrence.**

For your convenience, the [Inspector Area Map](#) is attached which includes the names and contact information for all Mineral Mining staff. This information is also provided on our [website](#) . We have also provided a [mobile friendly webpage](#) and encourage operators to use this for portable access to our contact information on your mobile devices.



# MINERAL MINING PROGRAM MINE INSPECTOR MAP

Virginia Department of Energy  
Mineral Mining Program  
900 Natural Resources Drive, Suite 400  
Charlottesville, VA 22903  
(276) 523-8100

Phil Skorupa, Director, (276) 393-5504

Paul Saunders, Safety & Permitting Manager, (276) 639-9377

Debbie McGann, Permitting Specialist, (434) 996-5910

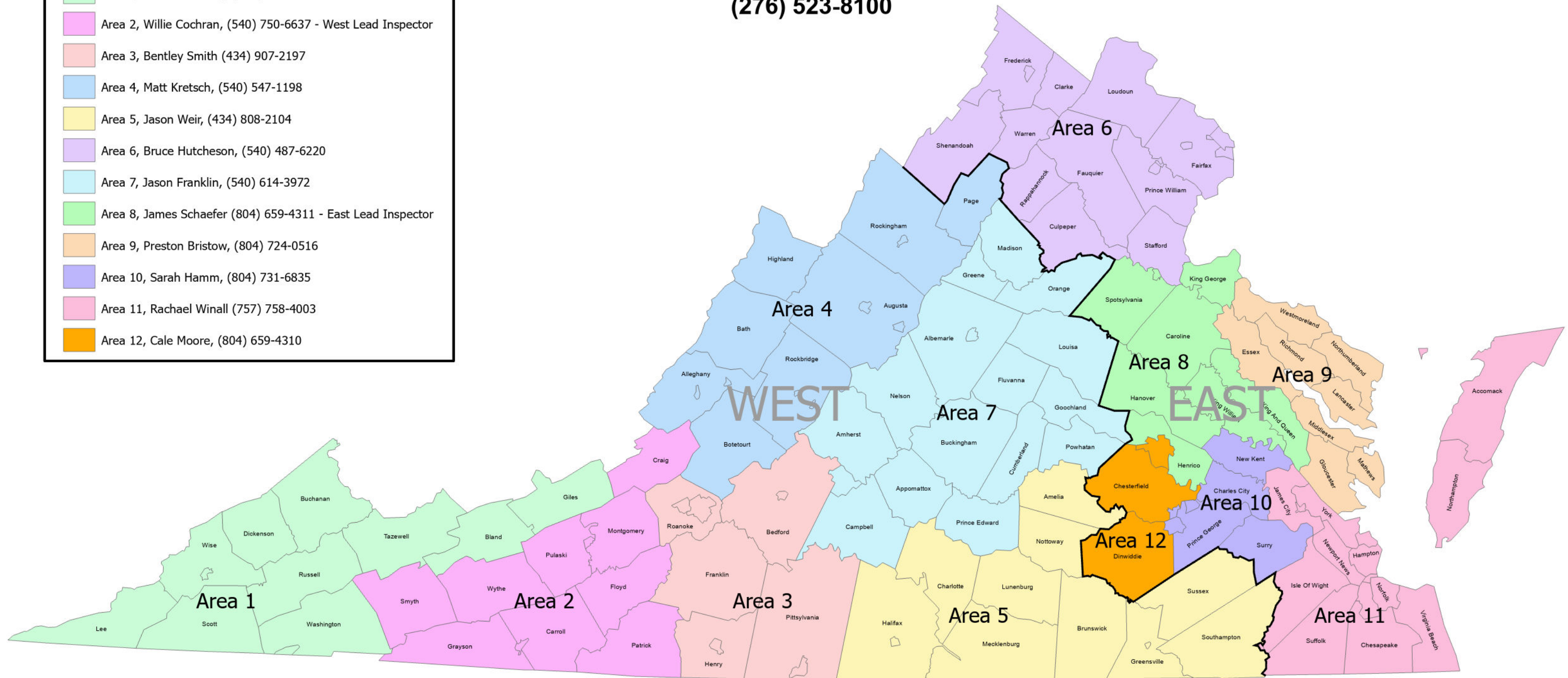
Renee Savage, Training & Certification Specialist, (540) 910-5422

Jeff Stewart, Training & Certification Manager, (434) 996-5696

Chrissi Wood-Smith, Technical Services Manager, (434) 987-3507

Jon Steinbauer, Orphaned Land Specialist, (540) 910-5421

- Area 1, Eric Snowadzky, (276) 870-6493
- Area 2, Willie Cochran, (540) 750-6637 - West Lead Inspector
- Area 3, Bentley Smith (434) 907-2197
- Area 4, Matt Kretsch, (540) 547-1198
- Area 5, Jason Weir, (434) 808-2104
- Area 6, Bruce Hutcheson, (540) 487-6220
- Area 7, Jason Franklin, (540) 614-3972
- Area 8, James Schaefer (804) 659-4311 - East Lead Inspector
- Area 9, Preston Bristow, (804) 724-0516
- Area 10, Sarah Hamm, (804) 731-6835
- Area 11, Rachael Winall (757) 758-4003
- Area 12, Cale Moore, (804) 659-4310



# Mineral Mining

## Mobile Friendly Webpage

- ✓ Report Accidents
- ✓ File Complaints
- ✓ Contact your Inspector
- ✓ Contact our Office
- ✓ Certification Lookup
- ✓ And More



*Scan with camera*

• *IOS device* 

• *Android tap ...*

*Add to Home Screen*

