

DMM Safety Alert: **Stay Out! Stay Alive!**

On a Tuesday evening in July 2017, a teenage boy became distressed while swimming in a quarry at a Virginia permitted mine site. Police, who were called to the site by the operator, helped the teenager get out of the water and EMS personnel treated him onsite. The teenager was sent to a local hospital for further evaluation and later released. The teenager was part of larger group of approximately 25 people (mostly teenagers) who trespassed onto the mine site to swim in the water-filled quarry. Police issued numerous citations for trespassing and dispersed the crowd. The teenager who became distressed in the water did not know how to swim and is very lucky to be alive.

Every year, dozens of people are injured or killed while exploring or playing on mine property. Over the past several years, there have been numerous deaths and serious injuries from falls, drownings, and other accidents at abandoned, inactive, and active mine sites throughout the nation. These sites attract children and adults alike, who trespass on these sites to explore, hike, climb, bike, swim or do other recreational activities. Active and abandoned mine sites have proved to be an irresistible and sometimes deadly draw for children and adults. Water filled quarries and pits hide rock ledges, old machinery and other hazards. The water can be deceptively deep and dangerously cold. Steep, slippery walls make exiting these swimming holes extremely difficult.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) created "Stay Out! Stay Alive!", a public safety campaign to educate children and adults about the existing hazards at active and abandoned mine sites. The campaign is a partnership made up of federal and state agencies (including DMME), private organizations, businesses and individuals. For more information on "Stay Out! Stay Alive!", check out their website (<https://www.msha.gov/sosa>) or contact MSHA at (202) 693-9400.

Remember: Warning signs and fences are in place for your safety. Stay out of active and abandoned mine sites.
STAY OUT! STAY ALIVE!

