



DMM Safety Alert:

Drowning Hazards

Warm weather can increase the risk of an accidental drowning at water filled mine pits. Drowning accidents have occurred at both active and inactive mine sites in Virginia. The Virginia Division of Mineral Mining safety regulations require mine operators to take certain precautions to prevent trespassing and drowning accidents, including:

- Access to unattended mine roads or openings must be restricted by a gate or fence and posted with warning signs (4VAC25-40-290).
- Hazardous pits must be fenced and posted with warning signs when work has stopped and a responsible person is no longer at the mine office (4VAC25-40-300).
- Areas with a hazard that is not obvious, such as silt/tailing ponds, must be posted with signs specifying the hazard and proper safety procedures (4VAC25-40-260).



“Stay Out - Stay Alive” sign at unattended area of active mine.

To prevent drowning accidents, post warning signs, check periodically for trespassers, and have sheriff or police check during weekends and holidays. In addition, alert nearby homeowners who have children to the potential hazard.