Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) Forum
November 19, 2008

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Summary

- Background to Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) Stay Out—Stay Alive ("SOSA") Campaign.
- California-Specific Information.
  - AMLU Hotline: **1-877-OLD-MINE**.
  - Some Accident Statistics.
Focus of brief presentation = Public Safety.

Presentation does not address people who knowingly enter abandoned mines to film videos for YouTube, collect artifacts to sell on eBay, geocache, etc. despite the dangers.
Background to MSHA’s Stay Out—Stay Alive Campaign

Man Who Fell Down Shaft Dies *(Desert Dispatch)*

Searchers Find Body in Abandoned Mine *(Fresno Bee)*

Boy Survives 200 Foot Fall Into Mine *(High Desert News)*

Motorcycle Rider Escapes Serious Injury After Tumble Down Mine Shaft *(The Daily Independent)*

Bike Rider, 11, Survives 40-foot Plunge into Unfenced Mine Shaft *(Los Angeles Daily News)*

4 Youths Killed in Old Eastbay Mine *(Oakland Tribune)*

Another Man Falls Down Abandoned Mine Shaft *(Victorville Daily Press)*

Fix Unmarked Mine Shafts Before Someone Else Dies *(Del Norte Triplicate)*

9-Year-Old Boy Who Fell Down Abandoned Mine Shaft Rescued *(The Bakersfield Californian)*

Brothers Die While Diving in Old Mine *(Los Angeles Times)*

Death Spurs Mines Alert *(Riverside Press Enterprise)*

2 Killed By Fumes in Abandoned El Dorado Mine *(CBS 13 News)*
Every year, dozens of people are injured or killed in recreational accidents on mine property.

SOSA is a national public awareness campaign launched by MSHA in 1999 and aimed at warning children and adults about the dangers of exploring and playing on active and abandoned mine sites.
It is a partnership of more than 70 federal and state agencies, private organizations, businesses and individuals.

MSHA produces DVDs and conducts other outreach. An outreach event is being planned for California in 2009.

WEBSITE: www.msha.gov/SOSA/SOSAhome.asp
California has an estimated 47,000 abandoned mines
- ~ 39,000 (84%) are physical hazards.
- ~ 5,200 (11%) are environmental hazards.

To report an abandoned mine, call 1-877-OLD-MINE.
Man Rescued After 2 Nights in Mine Shaft (August 17, 2008)

3 Men Died ... in Gold Mine (May 20, 2008)
California-Specific Information

33 Reported Incidents at Abandoned Mine Sites (2000-2008)
California-Specific Information

Abandoned Mine Accidents (2000-08)

- **Fatalities**: 24 (52%)
- "Near Misses" *: 14 (31%)
- Pet Rescues: 8 (17%)

* Accidents that could have resulted in a fatality, but did not.
Abandoned Mine Accidents (2000-08)

- Vehicle (motorcycle, quad): 8 (21%)
- Vehicle (SUV): 10 (26%)
- Falls (non-vehicle): 5 (13%)
- Asphyxiation: 4 (11%)
- Drowning: 11 (29%)
Abandoned Mine Accidents (2000-08)

Gender of Accident Victims

- Male: 32 (84%)
- Female: 5 (13%)
- Unknown: 1 (3%)

Ages of Accident Victims

- ≤ 15: 6
- 16-25: 8
- 26-35: 9
- 36-45: 4
- > 46: 6
- Unknown: 5
Dilemma of the Desert DVD

http://www.msha.gov/streaming/sosa.asp

Stay Out Stay Alive (SOSA) - This series consists of 3 videos regarding the SOSA...

Dilemma of the Desert - Real Life Experiences

Two personal stories revealing the dangers of abandoned mines

- Isaac
- Rusty
12/31/2007

An 11-year-old boy from Visalia fell 30 feet into a mine shaft, but thanks to rescue personnel, he will be able to celebrate the New Year with his family.

Crews said they used what is called the technical rope rescue system. One firefighter repelled 30 feet into the shaft and other firefighters lowered a basket and ropes. Then crew members basically pulled the boy to safety.

It happened Monday afternoon near Randsburg, north of Mohave Road.

"There are literally thousands of mine shafts throughout the desert and it's very dangerous," said Tony Differbaugh from the Kern County Fire Department. "If you are not familiar with them and in this case the mine shaft looks safe when you first go in 50 feet but the side shafts are dark and you can't see if you don't have good lighting. The boy took a turn and couldn't see it dropped out and it was a vertical drop."

About 20 Kern County firefighters, California City firefighters, and the Bureau of Land Management officials helped in rescue efforts.

The boy was taken to Antelope Valley Medical Center and with a broken hip or rib.

(Source: KGET TV)
A man died in a mine shaft north of Yermo.

Victorville Daily Press - Victorville, CA, USA
April 9, 2006

YERMO — Kenneth “Rusty” Lasley, 41, of Vista, died of injuries sustained in a fall down an abandoned mine shaft Friday, the San Bernardino Coroner’s office said. Lasley and his 7-year-old son, who was not identified, were exploring the Calico Mountains north of Yermo in an all-terrain vehicle when they came upon the abandoned mine in a remote, rugged area. Lasley ventured about 80 feet into a horizontal mine shaft, then fell into a vertical mine shaft estimated as being 30 to 50 yards deep, according to San Bernardino Sheriff’s Sgt. Doug Hubbard. The young boy rode his ATV to one of the few homes nearby, two or three miles from the mine shaft to seek help, and the homeowners called deputies. At 12:30 p.m., sheriff’s deputies, county fire personnel and two sheriff’s helicopters were dispatched to the area where the mine shaft goes an estimated 100 feet into the mountain.

The mine is “three ridges past” part of the mountain that is visible from below, Hubbard said, and is very difficult to reach except by helicopter or on vehicles designed to traverse rugged areas. It was determined that the mine shaft was very unstable and portions needed to be shored up before rescue personnel could enter.

A call was made to the Kern County Sheriff Mine Rescue Team and two San Bernardino Sheriff’s Department helicopters flew to Kern County and picked up team members and brought them to the scene. According to Hubbard, the Kern County team is among the best in the world at mine rescue. Lasley’s body was recovered at 8:30 p.m., eight hours after the first call came in to the Sheriff’s Department regarding the accident.
Send news clips to **Cy Oggins**: cy.oggins@conservation.ca.gov.

Report abandoned mines in CA to the **AMLU Hotline**: 1-800-OLD-MINE.