



**Today's discussion is from the
Fireline Safety Category.**

Mine Features and Hazards

When working in the area which is known or suspected for past mining activities, be aware of the serious hazard which may or may not be visible.

- **Surface Features at Abandoned Mines:** Mine buildings (mill sites, assorted support structures) waste rock dumps, glory holes (large open pits), trenches and shallow pits, tailing piles, other chemical hazards (explosives, 55-gal drums, meth lab supplies)
- **Underground Features:** Vertical openings-shafts, winzes, raises, ore chutes, stopes, ladders, stulls horizontal openings (often contain an unforeseen vertical component)-adits (single opening) and tunnels (two openings)
- **Hazards associated with these features:** Rock fall (near portals, highwalls, shaft collars or ore chutes), collapse and entrapment while underground instability or perimeter or overhanging rock slips, trips, and falls (especially down a winze/shaft inside an adit), mine gases (carbon monoxide, hydrogen sulfide, methane, etc) entanglement on wiring and debris within puddles collision between your head and the overlying rock, unknown substances, explosives, blasting caps or chemicals

References:

[USFS website about mine safety](#)

USFS Health and Safety Handbook 22.81 (Abandoned and Inactive Operations)

Basic Procedures Mine Safety Training Handbook (National Minerals Training Office, Missoula, MT)

Have an idea? Have feedback? Share it.

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