



DIVISIONS

ENERGY  
GAS AND OIL  
GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES  
MINED LAND RECLAMATION  
MINERAL MINING  
MINES  
ADMINISTRATION

## COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

### *Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy*

Washington Building, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
1100 Bank Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219-3638  
(804) 692-3200 FAX (804) 692-3237  
[www.dmme.virginia.gov](http://www.dmme.virginia.gov)

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 22, 2018

Contact: Tarah Kesterson (276) 523-8146

Cell: (276)-356-3405

E-mail: [tarah.kesterson@dmme.virginia.gov](mailto:tarah.kesterson@dmme.virginia.gov)

## **Virginia Wins Three Interstate Mining Compact Commission Awards**

*~ Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy Awarded For  
Coal Miner Safety and Training ~*

**Big Stone Gap, Va.** – Safety, training and reclamation in Virginia were all awarded by the Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC). The Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) received the top awards for underground and surface coal mine safety programs. Gillies Creek Industrial Recycling Bottom's Bridge Mine in Henrico County received the National Mine Reclamation Small Operator Award in the noncoal category.

DMME's "Safety Topic of the Month" program received the coal underground award in the state category. Safety talks are held at every mine site by DMME's coal mine safety staff. Miners also receive brochures and stickers that coincide with the monthly topics. The topics cover day-to-day reminders that are often life-saving tasks.

DMME also received the coal surface award in the same category for its 2017 Surface Mine Foreman Continuing Education Training Program. The program is available via DVD and is developed every two years. While this serves as a required training for surface foreman, the intent is to increase the skills of these individuals and keep them refreshed on day-to-day knowledge they need in the workplace. Over 350 foreman participated in the training last year

"Our coal miners are the most important asset to the industry in Virginia," said DMME Deputy Director Butch Lambert. "Our mine safety team is always looking for creative ways to ensure these miners are educated and refreshed as often as possible. The success of our programs can be measured by the decrease in accidents and by Virginia going three years without a fatality."

This is the third year the IMCC has given awards to recognize excellence in mine safety and health training programs and materials.

Also recognized by the IMCC was the reclamation work of Gillies Creek Industrial Recycling Bottoms Bridge Mine in Henrico County. Over 81 acres of this former mine site will become wetlands. The company got creative and used material from a sister construction site to be able to complete the wetlands which are also an environmental incentive. Wetlands improve overall water quality.

“The commitment of Gillies Creek Industrial Recycling to ensure the land will be better than it was before it was mined coincides with DMME’s commitment to the environment,” said Lambert about the award. “Our mineral mining team has worked closely with those at the Bottoms Bridge Mine to make a reclamation plan that goes above and beyond the requirements a success.”

The awards will be presented at the IMCC’s annual meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina, April 8-11th. The IMCC is made up of 25 states that have a mining industry.

###