



DIVISIONS
ENERGY
GAS AND OIL
GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES
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General Coal Miner Surface Certification Now Accepted by the Mineral Mining Industry

Big Stone Gap, Va.- Beginning January 15, 2016 miners with a General Coal Miner Surface certification will be eligible to work in the mineral mining industry. Previously, additional training was required for workers hoping to transition. The Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) oversees certifications for workers in both industries.

“We know there is a decline in coal jobs in Virginia,” said DMME’s Mine Division Chief Randy Moore. “This was an easy way for our agency to hopefully provide an opportunity for those coal miners without work.”

DMME Mineral Mining Director, Phil Skorupa, said the transition from a coal mine to a mineral mine would be easy for displaced workers. “Mining is mining. Sure, there are some techniques that are a bit different but the basic concepts are the same and we hope to see more people from the coal industry taking jobs in the growing mineral industry.”

Virginia code requires anyone extracting or processing minerals to have this certification before they can begin working on a mine site. In 2015, DMME issued 614 General Coal Miner Surface certifications and 1,565 General Mineral Miner certifications. There are currently 444 permitted mineral mines across the Commonwealth and the industry as seen a 10% increase in production over the last year.

Electricians certified by DMME’s Division of Mines are also able to work in the mineral industry with no additional training.

Workers that transition from coal to minerals can receive a new certification card by contacting DMME’s Division of Mineral Mining in Charlottesville at (434) 951-6315. The schedule for class certifications can be found on DMME’s [website](#).