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ENERGY
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GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES
MINED LAND RECLAMATION
MINERAL MINING
MINES
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COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy

Washington Building, 8th Floor
1100 Bank Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219-3638
(804) 692-3200 FAX (804) 692-3237
www.dmme.virginia.gov

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Contact: Tarah Kesterson (276) 523-8146

Cell: (276) 356-3405

E-mail: tarah.kesterson@dmme.virginia.gov

Coal Surface and First Class Foreman Certifications Now Accepted by the Mineral Mining Industry

Big Stone Gap, Va.-More certifications held by Virginia's coal miners will now be accepted by mineral mining operators and regulators. A valid coal Surface Foreman or First Class Mine Foreman certification with the Division of Mines satisfies regulatory requirements for those looking to transition industries. The First Class Foreman certification is required for underground coal mine foremen. The Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) oversees certifications for workers in both industries.

"We initially started accepting the General Coal Miner Surface certification and realized there was more that DMME could do to provide a well-trained and qualified workforce to our mining operations," said DMME Mineral Mining Director, Phil Skorupa. "We reviewed regulations and the agency's coal mine training satisfies what is required of miners on mineral sites."

A recent decline in the coal industry has resulted in job losses for hundreds of miners across southwest Virginia.

"Making sure this transition would be easy for Virginia's miners out of work is an example of how adaptable DMME is to change," said Virginia Mine Chief Randy Moore. "It also says a lot about our training programs because no matter the product they are mining, they know how to do it safely."

In 2015, DMME has 449 eligible coal Surface and First Class Foreman certifications and 1,447 mineral Surface and First Class Foreman certifications. There are currently 444 permitted mineral mines across the Commonwealth. The industry has seen a 10% increase in production and the number permitted mine over the last year.

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General Surface Coal Miners and 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 need to provide a copy of their Division of Mines certification and submit the appropriate application for a certification from the Division of Mineral Mining.

The Division of Mineral Mining requires verification that the certification has not been suspended, revoked or has any pending action with the Board of Coal Mine Examiners. The \$10.00 application fee will also be waived. For more information, miners should contact the Mineral Mining office in Charlottesville at (434) 951-6315.

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