



# COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

## *Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy*

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy Declares Buchanan County Landslide Abandoned Mine Emergency**

**Buchanan Co., Va-** The Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) is on the scene of an abandoned mine land emergency in the Lower Mill Branch section of Buchanan County.

The agency was notified Monday that a landslide was threatening a home and had partially moved it off its foundation. The residents evacuated and crews were called in to redirect water going to the slide, stabilize the slope to prevent more material from sliding and restoring stable drainage control.

The slide was caused by historic mining. Due to record rainfall on February 6<sup>th</sup>, existing portals began overflowing with water. The portals were left behind after coal mining that occurred in the area in the early 1960's. Stabilizing the slide will cost approximately \$100,000.

DMME also responded to a landslide in the Dante Community of Russell County on February 6<sup>th</sup> after record rainfall. Homes were evacuated and crews responded immediately. A ditch was constructed around the slide to stop material from moving in anticipation of more rain this week. A large rock that was at the top of the slide area was also broken apart as a precaution.

These areas are on private property and are often dangerous to those who are not properly trained or necessary to stop material from sliding and restore safety to residents. Therefore, anyone going to the site will need to receive prior permission.

DMME's Abandoned Mine Land program was established after the passing of the Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act in 1977. The agency manages a federal grant to reclaim issues caused by historic mining. Grant funds come from fees paid by the coal industry on each ton of coal mined.

