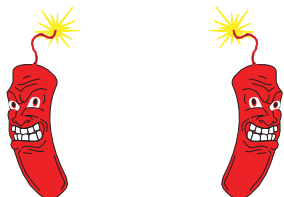


**Cave-Ins:** Areas that are likely to cave often are hard to detect. Minor disturbances such as vibrations caused by walking or loud noises, may cause a cave-in. If a person is caught by a cave-in they can be crushed to death. Also, a cave-in could trap a victim inside of the mine without anybody knowing that someone is in there. Death may come through starvation, thirst, or gradual suffocation.



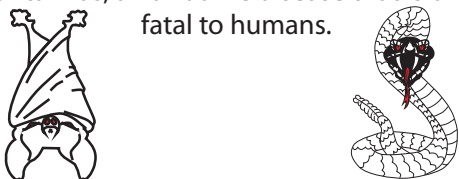
**Explosives:** Many abandoned mines contain old explosives left behind by previous workers. Explosives should never be handled by anyone who is not properly trained to do so. Even experienced miners hesitate to handle old explosives. Old dynamite sticks and caps can explode if stepped on or simply even touched.



**Rattlesnakes, bats, and rodents:** Old mine workings are among the favorite haunts of rattlesnakes (to cool off in the summer or to search for rodents and other small animals). Any hole or ledge, especially near the entrance of the adit or mine shaft, can conceal a snake.

Bats commonly use mine workings for shelter. Occasionally, bats carry rabies.

Some species of mice and rats carry the hantavirus, an airborne disease that is often fatal to humans.



## Rescue Problems

**NO INEXPERIENCED PERSON SHOULD ATTEMPT TO RESCUE THE VICTIM OF A MINE ACCIDENT!**

**CALL THE COUNTY SHERIFF!** They are in the best position to organize a rescue operation.

Attempting to rescue a person from a mine accident is usually difficult and dangerous for both the victim and the rescuer. Even professional rescue teams, who are trained to avoid all unnecessary risks, face injury or death. Adults who are tempted to enter a mine must realize and respect the inherent hazards associated with abandoned mines and should teach all children about these extreme dangers.

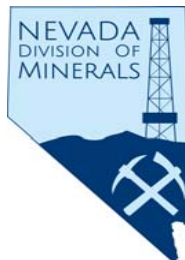
### **DON'T VANDALIZE!**

Fences, barricades, and warning signs are there for your safety. Disturbing or vandalizing them is dangerous and illegal. Mine owners have constructed these safeguards at their expense for your protection. Please cooperate with their efforts.

Those who remove tools, equipment, building materials, and other objects from mines and buildings around mines do not go home with souvenirs, but with stolen property

**THERE IS ONLY ONE SAFE WAY TO DEAL WITH ABANDONED MINES:  
STAY OUT & STAY ALIVE!**

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, OR TO REPORT AN ABANDONED MINE, PLEASE CONTACT THE NEVADA DIVISION OF MINERALS



## Dangers in and Around Abandoned Mines



Nevada Commission on Mineral Resources  
**DIVISION OF MINERALS**

Web site: [minerals.nv.gov](http://minerals.nv.gov)

Northern Nevada:

400 W. King St., Ste. 106

Carson City, NV 89703-4212

(775) 684-7040 (phone)

(775) 291-7825 (24 hr.)

(775) 684 - 7052 (fax)

[ndom@minerals.nv.gov](mailto:ndom@minerals.nv.gov)

Southern Nevada:

2030 E. Flamingo Rd., Ste. 220

Las Vegas, NV 89119

(702) 486-4343 (phone)

(702) 486-4345 (fax)

[ndomlv@minerals.nv.gov](mailto:ndomlv@minerals.nv.gov)



## Dangers in and Around Abandoned Mines:

**Ladders:** Ladders in most abandoned mines are unsafe. Ladder rungs are often missing or broken. Some will fail, even under the weight of a child, because of dry rot.

**Mine Shafts:** The top of a mine, or a mine shaft, is especially dangerous. The rock at the surface is often unstable. Timbers may be rotten or missing. It is dangerous to walk or ride **ANYWHERE** near a shaft opening. The whole area is often ready and waiting to slide into the shaft along with the curious. Mine shafts are often concealed by large mounds of dirt and rock. What may appear as a cool hill for "catching air" may lure you into taking the last ride of your life.

**Think before you ride.**

The fall down a shaft is generally accompanied by falling rocks and timbers. Even if a person survived such a fall it may be impossible to climb back out.

**Timber:** The timber in abandoned mines can be weak from decay. Other timber, which may appear to be in good condition, may become loose and fall at the slightest touch. A well-timbered mine opening can look very solid when in fact the timber can barely support its own weight. There is the constant danger of inadvertently touching a timber and causing the workings to collapse.

**Bad Air:** "Bad air" contains poisonous gases or insufficient oxygen. Poisonous gases can accumulate in low areas or along the floor. A person might enter such areas breathing the good air above the gases but the motion caused by walking will mix the gases with the good air, producing a potentially lethal mixture to breathe in on the return trip.

Because little effort is required to go down a ladder the effects of "bad air" may not be noticed, but when climbing out of a shaft, a person requires more oxygen and breathes more deeply. The result is dizziness, followed by unconsciousness. If the gas doesn't kill you, the fall will!!

**Water:** Many underground workings have standing pools of water which could conceal holes in the floor. Pools of water also are common at the bottom of shafts. It is usually impossible to estimate the depth of the water, and a false step could lead to drowning.

