

A Guide to the Mine inspector's reports and correspondence of the Virginia Dept. of Labor and Industry, 1921-1944

Mine inspector's reports and correspondence of the Virginia Dept. of Labor and Industry, 1921-1944
1921-1944

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The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

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Scope and Content

Mine inspector's reports and correspondence, 1921-1944, of the Virginia Dept. of Labor and Industry. Included are reports written by state inspectors of the various mines and quarries in the Commonwealth. The reports cover all types of mines and/or quarries that were either metal (such as gold and iron) or nonmetal (such as aggregate or crushed stone, sand and gravel) mines.

The reports are in a generic format and were used for describing the conditions of all types of mines and quarries. The reports offer a detailed assessment concerning the operation of the mines along with an evaluation of their potential safety risk. Each report or form gives basic information such as the name of the mine, location of mine, supervisor's name, date and time of inspection and the name of the state inspector. The report or form offers other information of interest such as the dollar amount of wages paid to the mine employees, the total number of employees working, the number of employees working a specific job title such as that of trackmen, drivers, electricians and machinists. There is also a notation concerning the number of mules or horses that may work in the mine.

One section of the form highlights the state's effort to determine safety conditions for the employees. There are questions of the mine foreman concerning the length of time the foreman has worked for the company and the experience the foreman has working with gas. The need to specifically identify gas operating mines is also revealed on the form. The state inspectors wanted assurance that the foreman would warn miners of potential dangers that may exist in mines and to ascertain if the foreman actually visited work sites while miners were working. Another feature of the report is the concern for inexperienced workers in the mine. The state inspectors sought information about training methods established by the mining companies to aid inexperienced miners.

The final section of the form or report verifies information concerning the actual structure of the mine. The ventilation, clearance, drainage, roof, break throughs, doors and brattice, ingress and egress of the mines are evaluated by the inspector and given a written assessment of fair, poor, fairly good, or o.k. accompanied by a couple of sentences of written commentary about the mines' general condition. Some reports have correspondence attached to them. The correspondence is usually carbon copies of outgoing and incoming letters between the state inspectors, mine operators and the Commissioner of the Department of Labor. The correspondence provides more details not necessarily covered by the reports. When the state inspectors considered a mine to have numerous problems with its safety procedures or overall maintenance, the results of the investigation would include numerous amounts of correspondence between the agency and the mining company. The correspondence are included with the reports.

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