

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **WATCH OUT FOR ABANDONED MINES WHEN RECREATING IN UTAH**

**Salt Lake City** – As temperatures warm and people head outdoors, staff from the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining Abandoned Mine Reclamation (AMR) Program reminds people to watch out for abandoned mines.

Old mines can be covered by sagebrush, old boards or dirt and can be difficult to see. Mining sites can be intriguing to unsuspecting explorers but can contain dangerous gases, unstable structures and explosives.

Tips to staying safe:

- Stay on designated trails and routes
- Check maps for mines before heading out, but remember that many mines aren't mapped.
- Never enter an abandoned mine- stay out, stay alive!
- Familiarize yourself with the landscape and know signs of mining areas (mine dumps, headframes, old equipment)
- Respect private property and NO TRESPASSING signs

There are approximately 20,000 abandoned mines statewide from silver mines in Big and Little Cottonwood canyons along the Wasatch Front, to popular all-terrain vehicle (ATV) trails in the west deserts of Tooele, Juab and Millard counties.

The AMR Program works to protect the public from dangers of old mines by sealing off access to openings and cleaning up waste. Staff is currently working on several mine closure projects including closure of 71 mine openings in the Gold Hill area in western Tooele County. Since the program began in 1983, over 6,000 mine openings have been closed.

Utah has a history rich in mining including coal, copper, silver and uranium. Often when mines no longer produced, they were simply abandoned leaving behind equipment, open shafts, tunnels, and piles of waste rock. In 1975, the Utah Mines Reclamation Act was passed making it illegal for mines to be abandoned.

If you discover an abandoned mine, report it to the AMR Program at 801-538-5340 or [amrinfo@utah.gov](mailto:amrinfo@utah.gov).

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