

# Legacy Mine Remediation

**AZ** There are over  
**19,000**  
legacy mining sites  
across the state

with over **120 miles** of streams  
impaired by pollutants related to legacy mines



Arizona has a rich history of metal mining and smelting. Starting in the mid-1800s, eager prospectors and frontier explorers mined for copper, gold, silver, molybdenum and lead throughout Arizona. The establishment of these mines predate modern mining practices and environmental regulations protective of human health and the environment. No longer in operation, these old mines, known as legacy mines, blanket the state. Their historic mine workings can be harmful to the environment by leaching metals into nearby streams and rivers, impacting public health and the environment. These waterways are classified as 'impaired' when standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State are exceeded. The impairments can also negatively affect groundwater supplies, drinking water sources, recreation sites and local wildlife.

Through collaborative partnerships, ADEQ is working with property owners, federal agencies and consultants to reduce surface water contamination caused by legacy mines. This ongoing effort is part of ADEQ's mission to protect public health and the environment. See more: [azdeq.gov/MyCommunity](https://azdeq.gov/MyCommunity)

ADEQ and its partners are currently remediating one or more mine sites in your area. Activities you can expect to see are:

- Water quality sampling
- Soil sampling
- Land mapping and aerial imagery
- Earthmoving
- Tailings pile remediation
- Mine adit closure

ADEQ and its partners will follow all safety precautions while on site. Please adhere to all safety signage and avoid visiting legacy mine sites.

For the most recent project information, resources for property owners, and to request public records, visit [azdeq.gov/mc/legacymines](https://azdeq.gov/mc/legacymines). If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to ADEQ at [legacymines@azdeq.gov](mailto:legacymines@azdeq.gov) or contact the ADEQ Community Liaison for your county. Contact information is available at [azdeq.gov/CommunityLiaisons](https://azdeq.gov/CommunityLiaisons).