



SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

Help amplify our energy campaign as we gear up for the 2023 legislative session

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ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH

TOPIC: MINELAND RECLAMATION

FACT SHEET: <https://wvecouncil.org/underbonding-reclamation-sites/>

CALL TO ACTION: <https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>

TAG US!

FACEBOOK/LINKEDIN/INSTAGRAM

- **ACTION ALERT!** Urge your legislators to address the reclamation crisis without gauging taxpayers. Please email your lawmakers today!
<https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>
- The underbonding of West Virginia reclamation sites and the pending bankruptcy of the SRF could end up costing state taxpayers over \$1 billion. To address this problem, we seek new legislation that will implement the recommendations of the Legislative Audit: Raise bond limits for mining bonds, Require more stringent bonding authority, Take the liability away from the taxpayers. Urge your lawmakers to address this problem by participating in our call to action!
<https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>
- Did you know that West Virginia has over 173,000 acres of unreclaimed mineland? WV faces a very real and costly disaster if we do not take action to create legislation that addresses these issues and provides a solution. Email your lawmakers today! <https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>
- Taxpayers in WV should not be footing the bill for reclamation costs. Read op-ed by @lucivaalentine to learn more about the crisis our state is facing.
https://www.wvgazettemail.com/opinion/op_ed_commentaries/lucia-valentine-taxpayers-footing-bill-for-risky-coal-bonds-opinion/article_712630fc-fbaa-534a-a685-8c315308157b.html Take action today by emailing your state legislators!
<https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>
- As a West Virginian, I am concerned about the pending bankruptcy of the Special Reclamation Fund and the underbonding of mineland reclamation sites. Our

state faces a very real and costly disaster if we do not take action to create legislation that addresses these issues and provides a solution. Take action today! <https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>

- Addressing the reclamation crisis is a top priority for the @West Virginia Environmental Council, the @Sierra Club West Virginia, and other environmental and citizen groups across the state. Read their fact sheet <https://wvecouncil.org/underbonding-reclamation-sites/> and participate in their call to action <https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>

TWITTER

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- Reclaiming abandoned mine lands improves water quality, revitalizes landscapes, and creates jobs and economic development in coal communities. Its time for action! Urge your legislators to address this crisis without gauging taxpayers <https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>

NEWSLETTER

In March 2022, the legislature passed SB1, a bill that creates a mining mutual insurance company to provide bonds to failing coal companies that can not get insured through the private sector. The Legislature allocated \$50 million in taxpayer dollars for seed money for the new insurance company. Legislators testified that this initial earmark could be just the beginning in what could be a long-term taxpayer bailout of the coal industry.

The federal Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) was established, requiring that coal operators reclaim their mine sites as mining is completed.

Because reclamation occurs after the coal is removed, mining companies need regulation to assure mines are reclaimed. So SMCRA requires coal operators to post a bond adequate to cover the cost of reclamation as part of their mining permit.

In West Virginia, however, the required bond does not cover the cost of reclamation. To make up for the shortfall, the state created a “Special Reclamation Fund” (SRF) to cover the cost of reclamation for sites that went bankrupt or forfeited their bonds. The SRF is funded by a tax of 27.9 cents per ton of coal mined. As less coal is mined here, current reclamation liabilities far exceed the money available in the SRF. The underbonding of West Virginia reclamation sites and the pending bankruptcy of the SRF could end up costing state taxpayers over \$1 billion.

To address this problem, we seek new legislation that will implement the recommendations of the Legislative Audit:

- Raise bond limits for mining bonds
- Require more stringent bonding authority
- Take the liability away from the taxpayers

What Can You Do?

Participate in our [call to action!](#)

[Read more in this op-ed in the Charleston Gazette](#)

For more information contact info@wvecouncil.org

HASHTAGS

- #energycampaign
- #minelandreclamation

TOPIC: PLUGGING ORPHANED WELLS

FACT SHEET: <https://wvecouncil.org/orphaned-well-plugging/>

CALL TO ACTION: <https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action-2/>

TAG US!

FACEBOOK/LINKEDIN/INSTAGRAM

- **ACTION ALERT!** Orphaned wells left behind by the oil and gas industry are leaving taxpayers responsible for the costs to plug them! Email your legislators today and urge them to address this crisis <https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>
- There are currently over 6,500 orphaned wells across the state of West Virginia. Plugging orphaned wells will be a win for our economy, environment and public health! Email your lawmakers today! <https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>
- The orphaned wells left behind by the oil and gas industry drive down property values because they oftentimes leak dangerous emissions, pollute groundwater, pose a threat to public health and contribute to climate change. One study showed that 53% of a sample of conventional wells were leaking nine cubic feet an hour. Let your lawmakers know this is NOT okay
<https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>
- An abandoned well is defined as one that has not been produced in 12 months. An orphaned well is one that no longer produces and the driller has gone out of business. With no operator, the expense and effort to plug them falls to the landowner or the taxpayers. Taxpayers in WV should not be footing the bill for plugging costs. Plugging orphaned wells will be a win for our economy, environment and public health! Take action today by emailing your state legislators! <https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>
- Addressing the issue of preventing and plugging orphaned wells is a top priority for the @West Virginia Environmental Council, the @Sierra Club West Virginia, and other environmental and citizen groups across the state. Read their fact sheet <https://wvecouncil.org/orphaned-well-plugging/> and participate in their call to action <https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>

TWITTER

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- Taxpayers in WV should not be footing the bill for plugging costs. Plugging orphaned wells will be a win for our economy, environment and public health! Take action today by emailing your state legislators
<https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>
- We must prevent wells from becoming orphaned in the first place by passing the Orphan Well Prevention Act, which requires companies to deposit funds for

plugging their wells up front before they begin drilling. Urge your lawmakers to support this legislation! <https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>

- Cleaning up orphaned wells will spur economic development, increase property value, clean up the air & water, & reduce the harmful emissions that leak from these wells, contributing to climate change. Take action today by emailing your state legislators! <https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>
- Orphaned wells leak gas and toxic chemicals which pollute our air and water and contribute to increased climate-related weather disasters like the severe flooding already happening here in West Virginia. <https://wvecouncil.org/call-to-action/>

NEWSLETTER

West Virginia has over 6,500 orphaned oil and gas wells. An abandoned well is defined as one that has not been produced in 12 months. An orphaned well is one that no longer produces and the driller has gone out of business. With no operator, the expense and effort to plug them falls to the landowner or the taxpayers. The cost of plugging these wells is estimated around 125,000 but can depend on depth, age, condition and location.

The orphaned wells left behind by the oil and gas industry drive down property values because they oftentimes leak dangerous emissions, pollute groundwater, pose a threat to public health and contribute to climate change. One study showed that 53% of a sample of conventional wells were leaking nine cubic feet an hour. Plugging these wells would reduce the amount of methane emitted in West Virginia.

SOLUTION

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed by Congress in the Fall of 2021 includes historic funding allocated to West Virginia. The Department of the Interior has granted up to \$142 million to West Virginia to “plug, remediate and reclaim orphaned oil and gas wells” across the state.

To fully address and take advantage of the funds granted to the State, the Legislature must pass legislation to prevent more wells from becoming orphaned in the first place.

ACTION

Addressing the issue of preventing and plugging orphaned wells is a top priority for the West Virginia Environmental Council, the West Virginia Sierra Club, and other environmental and citizen groups across the state. HB 4054, the Orphan

Well Prevention Act, introduced by Delegate Hansen, will likely be reintroduced in 2023. It would require drilling companies to put enough money away up front, to cover the cost of plugging their wells should they orphan them, and prevent taxpayers from footing the bill.

Your legislators need to hear from you!

What Can You Do?

- [Participate in our call to action!](#)
- [Read HB 4054 here](#)
- For more information contact info@wvecouncil.org

HASHTAGS

- #energycampaign
- #orphanedwells
- #PlugOrphanedWells

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS AND MENTION LINKS

Be sure to like, share, mention, and follow to our channels



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