



Safety Alert

Aging Impoundments

Many mining impoundments across the United States have been in service for decades and continue to operate under conditions far different from those originally designed. Aging infrastructure, changing environmental conditions, increased precipitation events, and deferred maintenance can all contribute to elevated risks. Regular evaluation and proactive management of aging impoundments are critical to protecting miners, nearby communities, and the environment from potential failures and catastrophic consequences.



Best Practices

- **Conduct** regular inspections to identify signs of erosion, settlement, cracking, or seepage.
- **Review and update** engineering assessments to address changing site conditions and aging infrastructure.
- **Maintain** adequate freeboard and ensure spillways and trash racks remain clear and fully functional.
- **Monitor** instrumentation data and promptly investigate abnormal readings or trends.
- **Implement** corrective actions immediately when deficiencies or adverse conditions are identified.

Report accidents and hazardous conditions: 1-800-746-1553

[msha.gov](https://www.msha.gov) | askmsa@dol.gov | [@MSHA_DOL](https://twitter.com/MSHA_DOL)