



# GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Governor's Press Office, [ra-gv.govpress@pa.gov](mailto:ra-gv.govpress@pa.gov)

## **Shapiro Administration and U.S. Department of Interior Secretary Deb Haaland Announce \$244 Million for Abandoned Mine Land Cleanup in Pennsylvania**

*Pennsylvania has the largest inventory of abandoned coal mines in the nation – and already, the Commonwealth has rehabilitated 91,000 acres of abandoned mine lands.*

*Federal funding will go towards rehabilitating abandoned mines, protecting homes and businesses, and safeguarding the health and safety of our communities.*

**Bovard, PA** – Today, **Lieutenant Governor Austin Davis** joined U.S. Department of the Interior **Secretary Deb Haaland** in Bovard, Westmoreland County, to announce a \$244 million investment into restoring and reclaiming abandoned mine lands in Pennsylvania. The Shapiro-Davis Administration and **Secretary Haaland** made the announcements in Bovard, PA, where a project with IIJA funding is already underway to stabilize a neighborhood at risk from subsidence – which occurs when the ground moves or collapses as a result of the collapse of an underground coal or clay mine – from an abandoned mine underneath the area.

The funding is part of the \$725 million for abandoned mine cleanup nationwide this year under the Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act (IIJA). The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation will receive \$244 million for projects to clean up abandoned mine lands and protect Pennsylvania

communities – removing waste piles, re-grading dangerous highwalls that can result in loose dirt, trees, and other hazards, treating abandoned mine drainage that effect streams and rivers, and preventing and treating mine subsidence underneath homes and business across the Commonwealth.

Pennsylvania [has the largest inventory of abandoned coal mines in the nation](#), with a roughly \$5 billion need for reclamation and stream restoration. More than 7,000 streams in Pennsylvania are impacted by acid mine drainage from abandoned mining sites – these toxic chemicals can harm our water sources and result in issues like erosion. To date, Pennsylvania has rehabilitated more than 91,000 acres of abandoned coal mines, and with this federal funding, will be able to continue this vital work that protects the health and safety of our communities.

“Thank you to Secretary Haaland for coming to Bovard today to announce Pennsylvania’s allocation of the Biden Administration’s \$725 million investment this year to clean up abandoned mine lands here in Pennsylvania and across the country. This is a big deal for so many families and business owners right here in Bovard – and across Pennsylvania – whose homes and businesses are at risk because of abandoned mines,” said **Governor Josh Shapiro**. “Within the past seven months, in two separate instances, families in Pittsburgh and Luzerne have been forced out of their homes because of a mine subsidence. This is a real problem in Pennsylvania – one the Biden Administration and the Commonwealth are focused on addressing. We’ll continue to work together to get stuff done and ensure our communities are safe for current and future generations is making a real commitment to solving. Thankfully, Pennsylvania is receiving nearly a third of the nationwide investment from the Biden Administration – that’s a \$244 million investment to clean up abandoned mines and make homes and businesses safe here in Pennsylvania. I’m grateful, but not surprised, because I know the Biden Administration cares about communities like this one here in Bovard.”

“Legacy pollution continues to impact far too many communities across the nation. Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda, we are making once-in-a-generation investments to clean up environmental hazards that have harmed coal communities for far too long,” said **Secretary Deb Haaland**. “Reclaiming and restoring these sites will create jobs, revitalize economic activity, and advance outdoor recreation across the country as we work to clean up these public safety hazards and build healthier communities.”

“Pennsylvania communities like my hometown of McKeesport helped to build and power America, but today they are paying the price for their industrial past,” said **Lieutenant Governor Austin Davis**. “Cleaning up abandoned mines and former industrial sites – which disproportionately impact lower-income communities and Black and brown neighborhoods – is important for addressing the past, as well as creating a healthier future for the families that live here.”

Pennsylvania has a long history of coal and clay mining. As a result of this underground mining, millions of structures in Pennsylvania are located over old, abandoned

underground coal and clay mines. That's why DEP offers mine subsidence insurance for Pennsylvania homeowners that may have abandoned mines beneath their homes. Damage due to mine subsidence or mine water breakouts is usually not covered by your homeowner's insurance policy. Residential Coverage of \$150,000 through DEP costs just \$41.25 a year. Since 1961, the Mine Subsidence Insurance program has paid out over \$36 million in homeowner claims.

Find out more about mine subsidence insurance and check to see if your home is at risk at [pa.gov/MSI](http://pa.gov/MSI).

For more information on the [Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection](#), [please visit the website](#) or follow DEP on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [LinkedIn](#).

# # #