

Economic Sustainability



Land and Legacy: Sustainable Management of Former Mines



Saskatchewan has one of Canada's strongest systems for regulating mining. From the first stages of exploration through construction, operation and final cleanup, mine and mill operations are carefully governed under environmental and safety regulations. To ensure that closed and fully remediated sites remain safe and do not create problems for future generations, the province created the Institutional Control Program.

The Institutional Control Program is a legislated framework that provides long-term protection of public health, safety and the environment at former mine and mill sites once operations have ended. After a company has met all regulatory requirements and shown that a site is physically and chemically stable, and has committed funds to the program, responsibility for the site may be transferred to the province. Established under *The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Act and Regulations* in 2007, this process provides a clear and structured pathway placing decommissioned sites under provincial care for ongoing monitoring and maintenance, helping ensure they remain safe over time.

Beyond protecting public health and safety and the environment, the program supports sustainable management of former industrial lands. It prevents future generations from bearing the costs and risks associated with long-term site care and fulfils both federal and provincial responsibilities for land stewardship. To date, 50 sites are listed in the Institutional Control Registry, reflecting Saskatchewan's commitment to long-term oversight and accountability.

Why It Matters

The Institutional Control Program helps ensure that former mine and mill sites remain safe and stable over the long term. By safeguarding groundwater, soil and nearby ecosystems, the program reduces the risk of future environmental or public health concerns. It also prevents communities and future generations from facing unexpected costs or hazards linked to past industrial activity. This long-term oversight strengthens public confidence in Saskatchewan's approach to responsible resource development.

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