

Mining Matters

DID YOU KNOW?

Smithers is the hub of mining and exploration activity for the northwest of the province. Although unstable world markets in recent years have caused exploration dollars to decrease, the Northwest Region is still seeing millions of dollars in project spending. From a mere \$6.5 million in 2000, we reached a high of \$170 million in 2007. In 2009, with lower commodity prices and stock market panic, spending still hit \$65 million. Of this, over 60% went to exploration (early and advanced) projects, 38% to evaluation of proposed new mine developments, and less than 1% to exploration at producing mines.

DID YOU KNOW?

Have you had a chance to check out the latest Smithers Exploration Group Exploration and Mining Directory? Smithers is the base of operations for at least seven drilling companies, four main (and many minor) expediting companies, eight professional cooks and Level 3 First Aid attendants (including agencies), and more than 15 geological and engineering consultants. These are just a few of the folks who offer services to the mining and exploration community and many do their hiring right here in Smithers. Don't forget the employees at the Northwest Community College School of Exploration and Mining and the local or visiting students in town to attend classes!

The mining community buys bulk foods for camps, uses print shops for brochures, posters, business cards, and displays, contracts satellite internet, radios, and telephones for remote locations, purchases safety equipment and off-road vehicles, leases trucks, uses transportation companies, rents warehouse space, utilizes local banking services, and puts out-of-town employees up at local motels, eating at local restaurants. Many of us with companies here in the Valley use a 'buy local' policy whenever we can.

Employees and their families live, attend school, and participate in the community right here in Smithers. While mining work may take them out of town, province, or even country, this is their home base.

"Mining Matters" is a bi-monthly column written by Anastasia Ledwon, P.Geo., and welcomes your feedback and questions at general@smithers.ca.

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