

A Hidden Peril in Woodford and Marshall Counties

ROANOKE, Ill., Oct. 4 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – Residents of Woodford and Marshall counties are being warned about the possibility of mine subsidence damage occurring to homes built over abandoned, underground mines. The warning is being issued by the Illinois Mine Subsidence Insurance Fund (IMSIF) in its continuing effort to educate consumers about the risk of mine subsidence in Illinois. According to Kathy Moran of IMSIF, “There are three things consumers in these counties should know: the first is that their homes may be at risk for mine subsidence; secondly, mine maps exist that can help consumers determine whether their homes are undermined; and lastly, that mine subsidence insurance is available in this state for those who need it.”

Mine subsidence is precipitated by the collapse of a mine roof or mine pillar inside an abandoned mine, which causes the ground above it to sink or subside. Structures built on the subsiding ground are subject to costly foundation or structural damage, usually thousands of dollars.

Mine maps, compiled and digitally reproduced by the Illinois State Geological Survey (ISGS), are available to help consumers determine if their homes are at risk. The maps can be accessed from a link on the IMSIF website at www.imsif.com.

Properties need not be directly over a mine to be affected by mine subsidence. The ISGS estimates that over 330,000 housing units in Illinois are in close proximity to mines. An estimated 6% of all housing units in Woodford County, and 24% of all housing units in Marshall County have possible mine subsidence exposure. The number of households that could be affected in these two counties total more than 2300.

Prior to 1979, insurance coverage was not available under traditional property policies. With the passing of the Mine Subsidence Act in 1979, insurance companies providing property insurance in Illinois were mandated to provide mine subsidence coverage. There are 34 “Mandatory” counties in Illinois wherein coverage is automatically included in property policies, unless waived in writing by the insured. Woodford and Marshall Counties are not designated as Mandatory, but coverage is available upon request.

The insured must contact their insurance agent or company and ask that mine subsidence coverage be added. The cost of mine subsidence coverage is the same in all counties, and is based on the amount of insurance purchased. For example, the annual premium for mine subsidence coverage on a home insured for \$100,000 is \$49. The annual premium on a home insured for \$300,000 is \$111.

Although IMSIF does not sell mine subsidence insurance, it was created to provide reinsurance to companies affording this coverage. The Fund also conducts geotechnical investigations to determine if mine subsidence is the

cause of damage and continues monitoring homes until ground movement ceases. In most cases, the ground movement continues for years, sometimes decades. The Fund also supports mine subsidence research and is takes a pro-active approach to consumer education.

Homeowners wishing to purchase mine subsidence insurance should contact their own insurance agent or company. For more information on mine subsidence or the Illinois Mine Subsidence Insurance Fund, contact Kathy Moran at 800-433-6743, ext. 261.

More information: www.imsif.com.

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