

Residents of Shelby County May Be at Risk for Mine Subsidence

TOWER HILL, Ill., Jan. 19 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – The Illinois Mine Subsidence Insurance Fund (IMSIF) is expanding its consumer education campaign to make residents of Shelby County aware of the possibility that their homes may be built over abandoned mines, which would make them at risk for possible mine subsidence. Mine subsidence occurs in an abandoned mine when a mine roof or pillar collapses, causing the ground above to sink or subside. Homes built in close proximity to these mines are subject to foundation or structural damage, which may cost thousands of dollars to repair.

IMSIF is also encouraging the use of mine maps, compiled and digitally reproduced by the Illinois State Geological Survey (ISGS), to determine if a specific location is at risk for mine subsidence. The ISGS map site also has a new feature, the Coal Mines in Illinois Viewer, which allows the user to enter a specific address to determine mine subsidence exposure for that location.

A property need not be directly over a mine to be affected by mine subsidence. The maps can be accessed from a link on the IMSIF website at www.imsif.com.

According to ISGS estimates, 330,000 housing units in Illinois are in close proximity to mines and have possible exposure to mine subsidence. In Shelby County, an estimated 1,215 housing units have possible exposure. Underground mines are found in Tower Hill and Moweaqua, while parts of Shelbyville fall into an “Underground Mine Proximity Region,” a region with possible mine subsidence exposure.

Mine subsidence insurance coverage is excluded from traditional homeowner policies, but Illinois consumers can have the coverage added to their existing property policy. There are 34 “Mandatory” counties in Illinois wherein coverage is automatically included in property policies, but Shelby County is not designated as Mandatory. As a result, homeowners in Shelby County must request the additional coverage by contacting their insurance agent or company.

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 \$150,000 is \$65. The annual premium on a home insured for \$350,000 is \$126.

Although IMSIF does not sell mine subsidence insurance, it was created in 1979 by Illinois legislators to provide reinsurance to companies affording this coverage. The Fund also conducts geotechnical investigations for mine subsidence claims, and supports mine subsidence research and 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.

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