



White Paper

## **Dust Control Techniques in the Canadian Asbestos Mines**

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After a discussion of the varieties of asbestos produced commercially with special reference to the Canadian asbestos mining industry, the different grades the classification system, the health risks inherent to asbestos mining and processing, and the elements of environmental control at the workplace are outlined. Various factors for the successful design of a dust control system are given, as well as design criteria for screens, conveyors bucket elevators and the air-handling system.

Asbestos is a commercial term applied to fibrous varieties of several specific minerals. In Canadian mining the asbestos industry assumes considerable importance. Its contribution to Canadian mineral production not only outranks all other non-metallics, but also ranks fifth in value of all metallic and non-metallic minerals. The importance of the asbestos industry is reflected in the largest mine in the Western World, the Jeffrey Mine at Asbestos Quebec Fig. 1 with an output of 700,000 tons of fibre per year.

In 1980 the USSR contributed 47 % of the world's 52 million tpa of asbestos fibre production compared with Canada's 29 %. The real importance of the Canadian asbestos production lies in the fact that Canada is responsible for almost two thirds of the world's exports whereas the USSR and the Comecon countries

consume themselves virtually all they produce, Fig. 2.