

CRITICAL REFORMS: MINING IN MANITOBA

MINING 101: THE MINING SECTOR

What is the mining sector?

When we talk about the mining sector we are talking about industrial activities related to the extraction of inorganic materials from the earth's surface. These materials include minerals (which have distinct chemical compositions), metals (also called ores) and aggregates (loose rocks whose economic value is determined by their use in construction).

HOW DOES IT OPERATE IN CANADA?

The term 'Canadian mining sector' refers to all activities related to mining in Canada. This includes governance and regulations, impacts to the Canadian economy at the national or provincial scales, exporting and importing of materials, Canadian mining companies, and any international mining operations that Canada is involved in either as the host of foreign companies or as an actor in a foreign nation across the global mining industry.

"The term mineral industry tends to refer to all mineral extraction with the exception of oil and gas. Oil sands, however, are mined and therefore, are considered part of the industry." - (Fitzpatrick & McAllister, 2025)

The governance structure of the Canadian mining is overseen through a patchwork of regulations and policies across the Municipal, Provincial, and Federal levels of government.

Municipal: Municipal governments are responsible for land-use decisions within their boundaries and are responsible for issuing development permits and other municipal approvals.

Provincial: Has most legal control over mines and minerals. Each Province has its own system of mining governance, and is responsible for the licensing, assessment and oversight of mines and mining claims within its own jurisdiction. The provincial government also has a legal duty to consult and accommodate when mining activities within provincial jurisdiction may impact the constitutional rights of Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit).

Federal: The federal government has different legal responsibilities depending on where mining activities take place (e.g., provincial or federal lands). At a minimum, mining projects are required to comply with federal laws addressing the environment, public health, and corporate governance. The federal government also has a legal duty to consult and accommodate when mining activities within federal jurisdiction may impact the constitutional rights of Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit).

For more information about mining governance, see our [Fact Sheet on the Regulatory Framework](#).



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What do we do with the things we mine?

The mining sector encompasses the extraction of materials such as metals (base metals, precious metals, etc), non-metals (diamond, potash, etc), and coal. It also includes extraction activities on oil sands. These minerals, metals, and aggregates are all mined because of the things they can be used to build or create. The Canadian Government has identified 34 of these materials as ‘[Critical Minerals](#)’ (see our Critical Minerals 101 fact sheet to learn more about critical minerals in Manitoba).

Minerals in Manitoba

The predominant activities in Manitoba’s mining sector are: 1) The Mining, smelting, refining of base and precious metals, 2) the Mining/quarrying of industrial minerals.

Base and precious metals commonly extracted in Manitoba include copper, nickel, zinc, and gold. Industrial Minerals commonly extracted in Manitoba include cesium, dolomite, gypsum, sodium chlorate, dimension stone, lime, crushed rock, sand and gravel aggregate.

Several mineral resources with potential for future economic development have been identified by the provincial government as it seeks to increase Manitoba’s rates of mining production. These include platinum-group elements (like platinum, palladium and rhodium), rare earth elements (like uranium), and other resources including titanium, vanadium, chromite, silica, diamonds, and potash.

USE OF TOP 6 MINERALS IN CANADA

LITHIUM	COPPER	NICKEL	GRAPHITE	COBALT	REES
 Rechargeable Batteries	 Transmission Lines	 Construction Beams	 Electrodes	 Chemical Catalysts	 Touch Screens
 Hydrogen Fuel Storage	 Electrical Components	 Rechargeable Batteries	 EV Fuel Cells	 Electrodes	 Wind Turbines
 Air Conditioning	 Electrical Wire	 Engine Components	 Battery Anodes	 Drying Agents	 Flat Screen Televisions

Data Source: Heather Taylor, 2024

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

For more info, use this QR code to visit the [Project page](#) on the Manitoba Eco-Network website.



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