

Pits & Quarries In Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia quarries provide the essential raw materials to build hospitals, schools, residential units, recreation facilities, commercial and industrial buildings, as well as the very means to construct and maintain our entire infrastructure. Quarries co-exist with communities in every county of the Province and are fundamental contributors to our lifestyles, our towns and our economy.

Aggregate producers work collectively and diligently to promote the responsible use of aggregate resources through the effective engagement of communities, stakeholders and government regulators. Local aggregate producers take pride in their communities and willingly step forward with many good will initiatives. They provide much needed employment, offer ongoing training and operate safe facilities with a long term approach.

By definition, a “Quarry” is an excavation requiring the use of explosives, made for the purpose of removing consolidated rock. Quarries vary in size and scope but are responsibly operated and managed with regard for Provincial Regulations and established Guidelines. Of importance, history has proven that many quarries have successfully transitioned to recreational lands, housing and commercial use. It is estimated that the total land use for quarries in Nova Scotia is approximately 0.11% of the total land base in the province.

On average, highways require 18,000 tonnes of aggregate per km, homes require 160 tonnes, hospitals and schools typically 15,000 tonnes and each person uses directly or indirectly 10-15 tonnes of aggregate per year (one truck load) . Aggregate facilities provide significant employment in rural Nova Scotia and support a broader economic and recreational base with all of our communities. In total, approximately 13,000,000 tonnes of aggregate is produced annually in Nova Scotia to sustain our lifestyle and infrastructure needs. Identifying good geology is a key factor when determining quarry locations, as concrete and asphalt require the highest quality rock available. This ensures our buildings, bridges and roads stand the test of time.

Most of the aggregate sourced through pits and quarries is used in the local area. For taxpayers this is the most cost effective and environmentally responsible approach. Trucking aggregate unnecessarily long distances is expensive for taxpayers and adds substantially to the carbon footprint.

Quarries, of all sizes, whether less than four hectares or over, are highly regulated and monitored by Inspectors from Nova Scotia Environment. The existing Pit & Quarry Guidelines are some of the most stringent of all jurisdictions in Canada. In any given year, it is not unusual for a quarry to be inactive or dormant for an extended period, especially if there is no demand in that area. Regardless, aggregate producers continue to monitor their respective sites to ensure full compliance to NS Environment requirements. At the end of its useful life pits and quarries are rehabilitated, a mandatory requirement of Approved sites.

The *Public Consultation Protocol* recently introduced by the NSRBA is a Best Practice template through which aggregate producers diligently identify future sites, consult with local communities, neighbors and stakeholders, communicate important information and potentially develop quarries of less than 4 hectares in size. Once operational, aggregate producers ensure all activities remain respectful of the environment and the local communities which they work within. Quarry producers safely manage operations and ensure full compliance to all the environmental Terms and Conditions associated with their respective Nova Scotia Environment Approvals.

Information Links:

Nova Scotia Department of Environment:

[http://novascotia.ca/nse/issues/docs/Fact Sheet on Quarries WEB.pdf](http://novascotia.ca/nse/issues/docs/Fact_Sheet_on_Quarries_WEB.pdf)

[http://novascotia.ca/nse/issues/docs/Pit and Quarry Guidelines.pdf](http://novascotia.ca/nse/issues/docs/Pit_and_Quarry_Guidelines.pdf)

Nova Scotia Road Builders Association:

<http://www.nsrba.ca/files/Public%20Consultation%20Protocol.pdf>