

In cooperation with the United States Geological Survey, it makes surveys of the water resources of the State. It investigates and recommends plans and policies for the protection of the State's water-fronts against erosion. It licenses gas well drillers and issues a permit for each well to be drilled in the State. The Commission also makes and enforces rules to conserve the State's oil and gas resources (Code 1957, 1967 Repl. Vol., Art. 66C, secs. 15-17, 675-95).

Appropriations	1967	1968
General Funds .....	\$261,893	\$316,998
Special Funds .....	24,855	21,355
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Totals.....	\$286,748	\$338,353
Staff: 12.		

**BUREAU OF MINES**

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The first Mine Inspectors were appointed by the Governor in 1878 to serve in Allegany and Garrett counties (Chapter 157, Acts of 1878). These inspectors functioned independently, reporting only to the Governor, until 1916, when they were placed within the Board of Labor and Statistics by Chapter 410, Acts of 1916. The inspection powers became a function of the Bureau of Mines upon its organization in 1922 as a unit of the Department of Labor and Statistics (Chapter 307, Acts of 1922). When the Board of Natural Resources was organized in 1941, the Bureau was transferred to the Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources. The Director of the Bureau is appointed by the Governor from a list of eligible persons certified by the State Commissioner of Personnel. The Bureau of Mines inspects all mines within the State for proper sanitation, ventilation, and safety standards in all mining operations. All persons or corporations engaging in open-pit or strip mining operations are required to register with the Bureau before starting operations and to report periodically during such operations. Effective June 1, 1955, all strip-mining operators must obtain a permit from the Bureau, pay a filing fee of \$200, and furnish bond at \$100 per acre, said bond to be released when acreage has been backfilled and meets with the approval of the Director of the Bureau. During the 1959 Session, the General Assembly amended the Strip Mining Law; and, effective June 1, 1959, the operator must pay a filing fee of \$50, and furnish bond at \$300 per acre, no bond being for less than \$1,200. By Chapter 618, Acts of 1963, the amount of bond in Garrett County was increased to \$500 per acre. By Chapter 514, Acts of 1965, the amount of bond in Allegany County was increased to \$500 per acre. No bond is to be less than \$2,000. No operator who has previously forfeited any bond posted pursuant to stripping activities or who had failed to pay royalties or wages due during such activities is to be permitted to strip any area by open-pit mining. In addition, no pond in Garrett County may be constructed in lieu of back-filling. By Chapter 144, Acts of 1967, the laws relating to the open pit or so-called strip mining or auger method of mining coal were revised. The Bureau of Mines examines all applicants for certificates of competency as mine foremen, assistant mine foremen, and fire bosses. It conducts classes in mining operations throughout the western part of the State and furnishes training in gas detection to men applying for first-class certificates and fire boss certificates of