

Statement

Illegal fossicking in Grawin Dumps: NSW Government takes action

The NSW Resources Regulator is carrying out compliance activity in Grawin Opal Fields NSW to deter illegal fossicking activities in the Grawin mullock dumps.

The Regulator is responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance with the *Mining Act 1992* and is working with Grawin Glengarry Sheeppark Miners Association and NSW Police to actively halt illegal fossicking activities in the dumps. The dumps serve as storage areas for mullock, which is brought up from underground workings by local opal miners and later used for the rehabilitation of mineral claims, enabling miners to reclaim their security bonds.

Fossicking is a permitted activity in NSW; however, it is crucial to adhere to the laws that safeguard the natural environment and protect the rights of landowners and other stakeholders with legitimate claims on the land.

While fossicking is permitted across the state, consents must be obtained before engaging in such activities. These consents are necessary for fossicking on private land, Crown Land, State forests, National Parks, land or waters subject to native title, or land held under a mining or petroleum authorisation.

Two out of the three mullock dumps have mining authorisations, making it an offense under the *Mining Act 1992* for individuals to enter these mineral claims for fossicking purposes without the consent of the mineral claim holder. Those found guilty of such activities may face penalties of up to \$5,500. The third mullock dump is situated on private land, and individuals found in this area without permission from the landholder may be charged with trespassing.

To ensure compliance, the Resources Regulator, in collaboration with NSW Police, will conduct regular inspections. Any individuals discovered fossicking on the mullock dumps or on private land without permission will be subject to appropriate penalties.

For more information on fossicking, we encourage the public to refer to '[A guide to fossicking in NSW.](#)'

The NSW Government is committed to protecting the state's natural resources and ensuring the fair and lawful utilisation of its land. We urge all potential fossickers to familiarise themselves with the applicable Regulations and seek appropriate permissions to engage in fossicking activities.

For media, please contact:

Mining, Exploration and Geoscience Media Team: meg.media@regional.nsw.gov.au