

# History of the Industry and Overview of Minerals & Energy

Wyoming has the smallest population of any state, but it is a top supplier of energy and other mineral resources to the rest of the nation. Wyoming produces more energy than the lowest-ranking 28 states combined. Our clean coal produces electricity in more than 30 states. Wyoming is also the top supplier of uranium for energy across the country. Additionally, Wyoming has large amounts of minerals such as trona, bentonite, and rare earth minerals, which are used in many products that we use today, like toothpaste, glass, and magnets. Wyoming mines more bentonite than any other state in the United States and has 70 percent of the world's known supply. 5 million tons of bentonite were produced in Wyoming in 2014. Wyoming also has the world's largest deposit of trona, supplying about 90% of the nation's soda ash. 17 million tons were mined in 2014. Northeast Wyoming is home to one of the highest grade rare earths deposits in the world.

Ancient seas that once covered what is now Wyoming helped create our natural resources. Seas expanded and retreated many times over millions of years, leaving behind plant and animal matter, as well as mineral deposits. Marine sediments worked together to form and preserve hydrocarbon deposits. Under ideal geologic conditions of pressure and temperature, coal, oil, and natural gas deposits were formed and preserved. Historically, these natural resources have been used by humans since ancient times.

The mineral and energy industry in Wyoming provides many jobs statewide. Almost all Wyoming citizens are connected to the industry in some way, even if it's indirectly. Think of adults you know. Do you know a miner? Teacher? Biologist? Engineer? Someone who works for the railroad? People who replant trees? These people are all supported by the vast mineral and energy industry.

Now, think about your morning. When you were getting ready for school, did you turn on a light? When you had breakfast, did you drink milk from a glass? Did you remember to brush your teeth? Did you happen to look out the window on the bus/car? Did you play a game on your phone? Did you have to clean your cat's litter box? If you did any of these things, you used products from Wyoming produced by Wyoming workers.

**Write something new you learned about Wyoming minerals:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**List a few products you have used today that were possibly produced with Wyoming minerals:** \_\_\_\_\_

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