

# Meshoppen Stone, Inc.

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September 27, 2010

Environmental Quality Board  
PO Box 8477  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8477

Re: Noncoal Mining Fees, Via Email

Dear Environmental Quality Board:

We have received the DEP's newest proposal to impose and increase rates for bluestone quarrying (noncoal permits). There are approximately 1,500 to 1,800 quarries throughout northeast Pennsylvania and believe if the state of Pennsylvania keeps raising fees you will put many of these operations out of business since many of them are 2 or 3 men operations.

We enjoyed bonding fees for years at \$1,000 dollars per acre and the DEP has increased those rates to \$2,500 to \$4,000 per acre. Most of us understood that you cannot reclaim the quarry for \$1,000 dollars per acre. Now, most recently, you are once again adding an annual permit charge and permit fee.

I have always thought we wanted to create more jobs instead of discouraging people from going into this industry. The charge for blasting and transfers of permits makes sense, the rest is not justifiable.

I would like the DEP to look at this fee schedule before finalizing since this will put more quarries out of business and also discourage more people from coming into the business. We also encourage an open dialogue with The Pennsylvania Bluestone Association and the DEP on any future changes. We thought we were an important industry for the state, please treat us as such. This industry feeds thousands of families.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



William M. Rank  
President

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