

Please carefully read the entire notice before responding.

I have made arrangements with the mine owner to make two collecting trips into the former Alabastine Mine, that is now owned by Grand Rapids Natural Storage. There is a wide variety of specimens to be collected. 'Pencil' selenite and alabaster gypsum are abundant, both white and honey/salmon colored. You may find clear selenite or satin spar gypsum. Fossil collectors may find shark coprolites, teeth, or spines, and plant and wood fragments, in the shale near the dolomite ceiling; ceiling collecting is strongly discouraged as a safety issue (and prohibited for petrified wood). Mineral collectors may enjoy seeing epsomite hairs hanging from the ceilings, but should only collect those that have fallen or that are growing on rubble on the floor.

Risk: Entering a mine implies accepting risk, including the chance of serious injury or death. By voluntarily signing up for this trip you agree to accept this risk personally and hold the mine owner, the Indian Mounds Rock and Mineral Club, or their agents, blameless for any accidents that may occur during the trip.

Safety: Everyone must sign in when entering the mine. Everyone must sign out when leaving the mine. NO EXCEPTIONS.

The safety list will be in the mine next to the elevator. I don't want to spend hours searching six miles of tunnels for some idiot who failed to sign out (you won't ever be invited back). I will accept no excuses for failing to follow this basic safety procedure. Safety is not optional underground.

Please do not collect alone. Use common sense. Don't get hurt.

Cost: There is a \$2.00 fee per person for entering the mine to cover the cost of electricity for lights and the elevator. Pay when you arrive as part of sign-in. You will not be allowed entry if you have not paid the fee. Please have the correct amount so I don't have to make change as you sign in.

Equipment: Hard hats are required. If you have extra hard hats, please bring them along (we usually have a few that do not have a hard hat, or forget theirs). Safety glasses are not required, but are always a good idea.

You MUST have at least two light sources. The mine tunnels we will be collecting in are not lighted. Make sure you start with new batteries, and have extras in your pocket. It is not possible to have too much light when you are 85 feet underground.

You MUST bring two pairs of shoes. One pair will be worn for travel in and out of the clean part of the mine that has cement floors. The second pair will be worn in the very muddy part of the mine where collecting will take place. It is strongly recommended that your second pair be boots for collecting in the drifts. It is very important to the mine owner that the finished parts of the mine remain clean because of the foods they store. We want to be able to return again, so this is an absolute requirement (unless you want to walk out barefoot, not recommended).

The mine is a constant 50-52 degrees. It is very muddy. Clearance in some tunnels is 4 feet (most are 12 feet) so you may do some crawling. Please dress for the conditions. Expect to get very dirty. Gypsum/shale mud is very sticky.

Tools: Rock pick, 2-5 lb sledge, chisels. Make sure you have a bucket or collecting bag to carry out specimens. You may want some wrapping material (newspaper) for protecting your best specimens. You may want to consider a pry bar. Travel light. You may bring a cart to the staging area underground.

Food: Mining is hard work. Bring a sack lunch and snacks. Everything you bring into the mine must be carried out. There are rest room facilities on the surface. Don't forget water.

Elevator: If you use the elevator you MUST leave the doors closed so it can be recalled from the surface or the mine. None of us want to be forced to use the stairs. The staff depends on the elevator being callable; we don't want to lose mine access because someone forgot to close the elevator door.

Insurance: You must be a current AFMS (MWF) related club member to attend the trip. Identify your club on your reservation request; you go to the back of the reservation line if this detail is missing.

Directions: 131 to Burton Street West. Right on Clyde Park, Left on Chicago Drive, Right on Judd. 196 to Chicago Drive (exit 72), Right to Burlingame, then Left onto Chicago Drive, Left on Marquette, Left on Judd. Back parking lot on the right. Please arrive at least 20 minutes early to pay your fee and sign in. Use Google Maps or Mapquest if you have doubts about the directions. Everyone must arrive on-time (the mine requires us to go down as a group - come late and you don't go down), but you may leave any time you have finished collecting.

The mine has restricted access due to city and other regulations. The first 40 people who confirm reservations with me for either date will be able to attend this trip. Children are welcome, but we ask that they be at least 8 years old. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are unable to keep your reservation. If registering a (family) group, please provide the name of each person. Specify which date you would like to sign up for in your request.

I will keep a waiting list; please include your phone number with your (emailed) request so I can contact you at the last minute if someone drops out, or if there are last minute changes (you will go to the end of the list if you forget your phone number on your reservation request). People on the waiting list from the last trip always have the first opportunity to sign up for the next trip (if they provided an email address).

Do not hesitate to ask questions. Contact (IMRMC) is Kreigh Tomaszewski at 616-243-5851 (home) or 616-787-7955 (work), or (email). Email is preferred. Complete requests will be first-come, first-served, but you really do need to give me the full names of all those attending in your party, their club affiliation, your email address, which date you want to attend, and your phone number (in case of any last minute changes). If you can't give me all the details I asked for in this notice, up front, you might get bumped to the waiting list when someone else responds completely while I wait for you to supply any missing details. If you are not a member of the Indian Mounds club please CC your club Field Trip Director on your response so they know you are applying for this trip (and so I can verify your club membership).

Kreigh