

Arizona votes to allow scrap tires in old mines

Amanda Smith-Teutsch, Waste & Recycling News, 3-5-10

State lawmakers in Arizona have voted to allow scrap tires to be used to fill abandoned mine shafts.

The Arizona House of Representatives voted 34-26 to approve the change to existing laws. Currently, the state permits "inert" materials like concrete, asphalt pavement, brick, rock, gravel, sand and in filling mineshafts.

Before the proposal moves on to the state senate approval, it's facing sharp criticism from opponents.

"We don't allow tires in our landfills," said Rep. Daniel Patterson, D-Tucson (District 29). "We should not allow tires in our mines. This bill would increase the threat to public safety and health from abandoned mines, and could harm economic markets for recycled tire products."

The move would pose risks of underground fires and could lead to contamination of public water supplies, the Democratic opposition argued.