

# LaSalle County Mining Coalition

*Industry and labor working together for progress and prosperity*

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## **Billion-Dollar LaSalle County Mining Industry Supports Nearly 2,000 Jobs**

*NIU economic study shows widespread impact of mining throughout county*

UTICA- This morning, representatives from LaSalle County's mining industry released an economic impact study performed by NIU's Center for Governmental Studies containing data on employment, wages, spending and other economic indicators.

The most prominent findings of the study were that the mining industry was responsible for creating and supporting more 1,979 LaSalle County jobs in 2013 and that mine employees were paid an average salary of more than \$75,000 plus benefits.

"This industry generates spending and income in every corner of the local economy," said NIU research associate Brian Harger, who performed the study this winter. "From gas stations and restaurants to grocery stores and doctor's offices, workers spend their wages locally and support other jobs. Companies use utilities and hire other local contractors. The overall positive impact of this industry is widespread."

Additional findings included:

- Local mining companies paid \$107.6 million in wages to their employees, with many earning middle-class wages with benefits
- For every job created by mining operations, another 14 jobs will be created or supported in manufacturing, healthcare, banking, hospitality and retail
- 83% of employees live in LaSalle County
- Local mining companies paid \$35.3 million in state and local taxes and \$2.5 million in LaSalle County property taxes

"This study confirms what our experience in the mining industry has always shown," said Dan Eichholz, spokesman for the LaSalle County Mining Coalition. "When we put people to work, the community benefits. The industry is proud of what we do, not only in providing good jobs and tax revenue – but also in being good neighbors by supporting LaSalle County charities and civic organizations."

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The study also found that many manufacturers locate in LaSalle County due to its proximity to natural resources. “The local mining industry is critical to our business,” said Patrick Glenn, controller of Peru-based James Hardie Building Products. “It allows us to provide good, local jobs. We rely on quality materials mined here in LaSalle County to make our products. These materials include silica sand and Portland cement produced from limestone.”

“The jobs created in the mining industry are the solid middle class jobs that have become so difficult to find,” said Ed Maher, spokesman for the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 150, which represents employees working in several mines. “These men and women are able to support families with good wages, as well as earn health insurance and save for their retirements.”

The study was released at the LaSalle County Historical Museum and Heritage Center. Mining operations have been present in LaSalle County for nearly 150 years. Today, the industry extracts limestone, gravel and sand for use in many industries. “The LaSalle County Historical Museum is working closely with the local silica and limestone mining companies to create exhibits that will educate the public on the importance of mining through the 20th century in terms of job creation, mine safety, and economic benefits to LaSalle county and the nation as a whole,” said Ron Bluemer, Executive Director of the museum campus.

The LaSalle County Mining Coalition is a group of mining companies and labor organizations that formed in 2014 to address concerns about mining in LaSalle County and to promote the value of local mining. More information about the mining industry in LaSalle County can be found at [www.lasallecountymining.org](http://www.lasallecountymining.org).

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