

SOLUTION MINING RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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MEETING
PAPER



GEOLOGIC SITE CHARACTERIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STORAGE AND MINING IN SALT

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ABSTRACT

Geologic **S**ite **C**haracterization should be a dynamic, continuing **process**, not an event. Its successes and failures are legion and can make or break an operator. A **balanced** approach must be sought to provide adequate information for safety of operations, neither slighting nor overdoing the effort.

The evolving nature of study methods and geologic knowledge essentially mandates that characterization efforts be reviewed periodically. However, indifference, nonchalance, and skepticism describe attitudes sometimes observed regarding this subject. Unawareness may also be a factor. Unfortunately, several unanticipated events have led to severe economic consequences for the operators. The hard-learned lessons involving several unanticipated geotechnical occurrences at several Gulf Coast salt domes are discussed.

The ultimate benefit of valuing site characterization efforts may be more than just enhanced safety and health—costs not expended in lost facilities and litigation can become profit.