



BC Mine Blaster Certifications – Frequently Asked Questions

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Note: the following information pertains to BC Mine Blaster Certifications— that is, blasting that's performed on a mine site. If you require certification for blasting performed elsewhere (on a construction site, for example), contact WorkSafeBC.

1. What are the BC Mine Blaster Certifications?

Blasting is a regular part of mining operations. As required by the Health, Safety and Reclamation Code for Mines in British Columbia (Code), to work in, conduct, or oversee blasting operations, you must obtain a BC Mine Blaster Certification for the type of blasting activity you'll be performing.

The Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals offers different levels of BC Mine Blaster Certifications. These certifications are enabled through the Code. The BC Mine Blaster Certification exams were previously offered manually in person, but the exam process has been modernized and updated and is now available online only. You will still be required to attend an interview with a certified inspector of mines, but only after you have passed your online exams.

2. What happened to the previous BC Mine Blaster Certifications?

The previous BC Mine Blaster Certifications have been updated to a new classification system. If you hold one of the previous certifications, it is still valid until the noted expiry date. However, it is recommended that you register for the online program before your certificate expires. The table below shows each of the previous BC Mine Blaster Certification types and their new certification equivalent:

Previous Certification	New Certification Equivalent
Surface (Basic)	Surface Blaster - 3 rd Class
Surface	Surface Blaster - 2 nd Class
Urban	Surface Blaster - 1 st Class
Underground (Single shot)	Underground Blaster - 3 rd Class
Underground	Underground Blaster - 2 nd Class
Underground Coal	Underground Blaster - 1 st Class
Exploration	Seismic Endorsement

3. When do I have to have my certification by?

If you currently hold a valid BC Mine Blaster Certification, you do not need to retake the exam or interview. However, you should register for the online program before your current certification expires.

4. Where do I go to register for the online program?

The online program is available through the following website:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/mineral-exploration-mining/health-safety/certifications>

Or through OpenSchool BC

<https://www.openschool.bc.ca/bcminescert>

5. What do I do if I have technical issues with the online program?

Please contact OSBC Online support for assistance at OSBC.Online@gov.bc.ca

6. What do I do if I forget my UserID or password?

The OpenSchool BC login page will guide you through the UserID and password recovery process.

<https://mytraining.openschool.bc.ca/login/index.php>

7. What is a provisional Blaster certificate?

A provisional Blaster certificate is a temporary certificate issued by a mine manager on a one-time basis. It is valid for up to 90 days and allows an employee to work as a blaster while they complete the full certification process. The certificate is granted based on the employee's experience and training.

8. If I only have a blaster certificate issued by WorkSafeBC, can I blast on a mine site?

No, you must have a valid BC Mine Blaster Certification issued by the Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals to blast on a mine site.

However, if you are an avalanche control blaster, you must hold both a BC Mine Surface Blaster – 3rd Class certificate as well as a valid WorkSafeBC Avalanche Control Blaster Certificate. This is the only blaster certification issued by WorkSafeBC that is eligible for recognition as a certification on B.C. mines.

9. I am an avalanche control blaster, what kind of certification do I need to blast on a B.C. mine site?

To conduct avalanche blasting on BC mine sites, you must hold both a WorkSafeBC Avalanche Control Blaster Certificate and a Surface Blaster – 3rd Class certificate. The Surface Blaster – 3rd Class certificate must be obtained through the standard application process.

10. If I have a valid blasting certificate issued by another province or territory, can I blast on a B.C. mine site?

No, you must first obtain a BC Mine Blaster Equivalent Certification. The equivalent certification is a result of an inter-provincial agreement ([Canadian Free Trade Agreement](#)) that requires provinces to recognize certified skills from other jurisdictions in Canada. To obtain credentials in B.C., you must complete a regulatory exam to ensure familiarity with the regulations for the jurisdiction for which you are trying to obtain certification.

The BC Mine Blaster Equivalent Certification exam will test your knowledge of Part 8 of the Health, Safety and Reclamation Code for Mines in B.C. and federal blasting legislation. After you pass your exam, you must pass an interview with an inspector of mines (examiner). During the interview, the examiner will confirm your valid certification from another province or territory and then will determine which BC Mine Blaster Certification you're qualified for. Proof of a valid equivalent certification from another jurisdiction must be provided at the interview.

11. What types of mine blaster certifications are available and what are the prerequisites?

There are seven different BC Mine Blaster Certifications and one equivalent certification:

Surface Blaster - 3 rd Class	
<p>The regulatory exam focuses on regulatory requirements, magazines, care and handling of explosives, guarding, and transportation safety. The technical exam focuses on surface blasting techniques.</p> <p>Completing the certification process qualifies individuals to handle explosives, assist in mine blasting preparation, receive training from a certified BC Mine Blaster, and perform single shots on a mine surface.</p>	
Prerequisites:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 18 years of age • At least two months on a pattern under the direct supervision of a certified BC Mine Blaster OR have a valid WorkSafeBC Avalanche Control Blaster Certification.
Applicants Must Provide:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for BC Mine Blaster Certification • Proof of ID • Digital photo (for the applicants secure ID card) • Police Information Check (PIC) • Proof of experience (e.g., logbook) and/or letter of reference from an employer or a certified BC Mine Blaster
Passing Grade for Each Online Exam:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75%

Surface Blaster - 2 nd Class	
<p>The regulatory exam focuses on regulatory requirements, magazines, care and handling of explosives, guarding, and transportation safety. The technical exam focuses on surface blasting techniques.</p> <p>Completing the certification process qualifies individuals to perform general surface mine blasting operations outside of defined urban zones.</p>	
Prerequisites:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 18 years of age • At least six months on pattern, with a minimum of 12 blasts under the direct supervision of a certified blaster • BC Mine Surface Blaster - 3rd Class OR equivalent experience/certification from another jurisdiction
Applicant Must Provide:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for BC Mine Blaster Certification • Proof of ID • Digital photo (for the applicants secure ID card) • Police Information Check (PIC) • Proof of experience (e.g., logbook) and/or letter of reference from an employer or a certified BC Mine Blaster

Passing Grade for Each Online Exam:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75%
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Surface Blaster - 1 st Class (Urban or Close Proximity)	
<p>The regulatory exam focuses on regulatory requirements, magazines, care and handling of explosives, guarding, and transportation safety. The technical exam focuses on surface blasting techniques and urban or close proximity blasting.</p> <p>Completing the certification process qualifies individuals to perform all general surface mine blasting operations in all zones.</p>	
Prerequisites:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 18 years of age At least six months experience on close proximity blasting projects, with a minimum of 20 blasts under the direct supervision of a blaster with a BC Mine Surface Blaster - 1st class certification. BC Mine Surface Blaster - 2nd Class OR equivalent experience/certification from another jurisdiction
Applicant Must Provide:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for BC Mine Blaster Certification Proof of ID Digital photo (for the applicants secure ID card) Police Information Check (PIC) Proof of experience (e.g., logbook) and/or letter of reference from an employer or a certified BC Mine Surface Blaster - 1st class.
Passing Grade for Each Online Exam:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80%

Underground Blaster - 3 rd Class	
<p>The regulatory exam focuses on regulatory requirements, magazines, care and handling of explosives, guarding, and transportation safety. The technical exam focuses on underground single-shot blasting activities.</p> <p>Completing the certification process qualifies individuals to handle and assist with mine blasting preparation, to be trained by a certified BC Mine Blaster and perform single shots in a non-coal underground mine.</p>	
Prerequisites:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 18 years of age Assistance on a minimum of 12 single-shot charges under the direct supervision of a certified BC Mine Blaster

Applicant Must Provide:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for BC Mine Blaster Certification • Proof of ID • Digital photo (for the applicants secure ID card) • Police Information Check (PIC) • Proof of experience (e.g., logbook) and/or letter of reference from an employer or a certified BC Mine Blaster
Passing Grade for Each Online Exam:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75%

Underground Blaster - 2nd Class	
<p>The regulatory exam focuses on regulatory requirements, magazines, care and handling of explosives, guarding, and transportation safety. The technical exam focuses on underground blasting techniques.</p> <p>Completing the certification process qualifies individuals to perform all general underground mine blasting operations, except for underground coal.</p>	
Prerequisites:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 18 years of age • At least 60 days working with a certified Underground Mines Blaster, with a minimum of 12 face rounds or two long-hole blasts • BC Mine Underground Blaster - 3rd Class OR equivalent experience/certification from another jurisdiction
Applicant Must Provide:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for BC Mine Blaster Certification • Proof of ID • Digital photo (for the applicants secure ID card) • Police Information Check (PIC) • Proof of experience (e.g., logbook) and/or letter of reference from an employer or a certified BC Mine Blaster
Passing Grade for Each Online Exam:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75%

Underground Blaster - 1st Class (Underground Coal)	
<p>The regulatory exam focuses on regulatory requirements, magazines, care and handling of explosives, guarding, and transportation safety. The technical exam focuses on underground coal mine blasting techniques and working in a coal environment.</p> <p>Completing the certification process qualifies individuals to perform underground blasting operations in underground coal mines only.</p>	

Prerequisites:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 18 years of age • Experience working under the direct supervision of a blaster with a BC Mine Underground Blaster - 1st Class (Shot Firer) certification for 12 underground coal blasting operations OR equivalent. • BC Mine Underground Blaster - 2nd Class
Applicant Must Provide:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for BC Mine Blaster Certification • Proof of ID • Digital photo (for the applicants secure ID card) • Police Information Check (PIC) • Proof of experience (e.g., logbook) and/or letter of reference from an employer or certified BC Mine Blaster
Passing Grade for Each Online Exam:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80%

Seismic Endorsement	
<p>The regulatory exam focuses on regulatory requirements, magazines, care and handling of explosives, guarding, and transportation safety. The technical exam focuses on seismic blasting activities.</p> <p>Completing the certification process qualifies individuals to set off charges in relation to exploration activities: handle and assist with blast preparation and perform seismic blasts and single-series electric blasts.</p>	
Prerequisites:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 18 years of age • Experience assisting in setting a minimum of six seismic blast operations under the direct supervision of a certified blaster
Applicant Must Provide:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for BC Mine Blaster Certification • Proof of ID • Digital photo (for the applicants secure ID card) • Police Information Check (PIC) • Proof of experience (e.g., logbook) and/or letter of reference from an employer or a certified BC Mine Blaster
Passing Grade for Each Online Exam:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75%

Equivalent Certification	
<p>The equivalent blaster certification process, under the Canadian Free Trade Agreement, allows individuals with valid blaster certifications from other Canadian provinces or territories to transfer their qualifications.</p> <p>To obtain credentials in B.C., applicants must complete a regulatory exam to ensure familiarity with the regulations applicable in BC.</p> <p>The regulatory exam focusses on regulatory requirements, magazines, care and handling of explosives, guarding, and transportation safety.</p> <p>During the interview, the examiner determines which blaster certification the applicant qualifies for. Applicants must provide proof of equivalent certification from another jurisdiction at the interview.</p>	
<p>Avalanche Control Blaster</p> <p>To conduct avalanche blasting on BC mine sites, applicants must hold both a WorkSafeBC Avalanche Control Blaster Certificate and a Surface Blaster – 3rd Class certificate. The Surface Blaster – 3rd Class certificate must be obtained through the standard application process.</p>	
Prerequisites:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 18 years of age • A current, valid blaster certificate from another Canadian provincial or territorial jurisdiction, outside of B.C., OR • A valid WorkSafeBC Avalanche Control Blaster Certificate
Applicant Must Provide:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for BC Mine Blaster Certification • Valid existing Blaster certificate • Proof of ID • Digital photo (for the applicants secure ID card) • Police Information Check (PIC) • Proof of experience (e.g., logbook) and/or letter of reference from an employer or a certified BC Mine Blaster
Passing Grade for Each Online Exam:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75%

12. What is the cost of the certification, and will I have to take it again? Why is it not free like other certifications?

Each BC Mine Blaster Certification costs \$100, which covers exam registration, the certification interview, and the issuance of the certification and secure ID card. The certification is valid for five years, and you will need to retake it if you wish to continue blasting on B.C. mine sites.

Funds recovered from the certification program will support subscription costs for use of the online software and further development and updating of the certification programs.

13. Who put together the BC Mine Blaster Certifications?

The Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals, along with Open School BC developed the BC Mine Blaster Certifications. If you have questions about the program, please contact mine.certifications@gov.bc.ca.

14. How long is the online program? What happens if I fail an exam?

After registering and paying for certification, you'll take two online exams: first, a regulatory exam, then once you've successfully completed that, a technical exam that's specific to the certification you've selected. You'll have three attempts to pass each of these exams.

The certification program is active for each registrant for six months from the date of registration – meaning you can take as long or as little time as you like to complete the two exams within the 6-month period. If you fail an exam attempt, you must wait at least one week before trying again (your second and third attempts at each exam are included in the \$100 fee). It is important to note that once you start an exam, you must complete it in the allotted timeframe; exam time allotments range from one hour to four hours depending on the number of questions in the exam.

Once you've successfully completed both exams, you're eligible to schedule an interview with an Inspector of Mines.

15. After I pass my BC Mine Blaster Certification exam, how do I schedule an interview? What do I need to bring to the interview?

Once you pass the regulatory and technical exams, you are eligible for an interview with an inspector of mines. At that point, please email @Mine.Certifications@gov.bc.ca and attach the following documents:

1. Completed Registration form for BC Mine Blaster Certification

- Include proof of experience in the application or attach a reference letter.
 - Have your current or previous manager or a BC Mine Blaster Certificate holder sign your proof of experience.
- Use the [verify with Canada Post](#) link in the application form to check your mailing address. This helps us send your certificate to the right place.
- You can fill out and sign the application using [Microsoft Edge](#) or [Adobe Reader \(Free version\)](#). Or print and sign it, then scan it with a printer or take a clear photo of it on your phone.

2. Police Information Check (PIC)

- Get this from your local police detachment (RCMP or local jurisdiction).
- The PIC must be issued within three months of your application.
- [Learn how to get a PIC from the RCMP](#).
- A PAL or NEXUS card is not accepted.

3. Digital Photo

- Your photo must meet the Secure ID Photo Specifications.
- We will use the photo for your secure ID card.

For Equivalent Certification Only:

If you already have a blasting competency certificate from another jurisdiction within BC or Canada, you may choose the [Equivalent Certification Process](#)—this process requires the successful completion of the regulatory exam and an interview. Proof of a valid certification, in good standing, from another jurisdiction must also be provided during the interview. To conduct avalanche blasting on BC mine sites, applicants must hold both a WorkSafeBC Avalanche Control Blaster Certificate and a Surface Blaster – 3rd Class certificate. The Surface Blaster – 3rd Class certificate must be obtained through the standard application process.

What to Bring to Your Interview:

1. **Government-issued photo ID** (shown during the interview to confirm your identity):
 - o Examples: Passport or driver’s licence.

16. Where do I get a Police Information Check completed?

Police Information Checks (PIC) are available through your local RCMP office or police agency and you must bring a copy to your interview. You must obtain a PIC from the RCMP or police with jurisdiction in the area where you live (not where you work). For example, if you work in Smithers but live in Halifax, then you need to obtain a PIC from the Halifax Regional Police, not the Smithers RCMP. Your PIC must have been completed within 3 months of applying for a BC Mine Blaster Certification. Information on PIC can be found here: [Obtain a Criminal Record Check \(Police Information Check\)](#).

17. When do I need to have a Police Information Check done?

You must have a Police Information Check (PIC) done prior to your interview. Please note that it takes approximately two weeks to receive the results of your PIC. Your PIC must have been completed within 3 months of applying for a BC Mine Blaster Certification.

18. What happens if a blaster receives a criminal conviction while they have an active BC Mine Blaster Certification?

If a blaster with a valid BC Mine Blaster Certificate receives a criminal conviction, they must disclose that information to an Inspector of Mines. The Inspector may decide to suspend or cancel the blaster’s certificate, depending on the seriousness of the conviction.

19. What are the secure photo ID photo specifications?

Please keep the following in mind when selecting or taking your secure ID photo:

Photographer Instructions

Photographers taking photographs of the client must meet the photograph standards. Once you’ve taken the photo and ensured that it meets the standards below, please send the photo file to the Ministry for processing and uploading to the Registry. Email to: mine.certifications@gov.bc.ca

PHOTOGRAPH STANDARDS
No selfies. Digital cameras or cell phone cameras are acceptable.
Camera Settings

1. **Flash:** off
2. **Format:** JPG, JPEG
3. **File Size:** maximum 1,800 KB / 1.8 MB
4. **Picture Size / Shape:** rectangular portrait, not square

Photo Composition

1. Take the photo against a neutral background such as a blank wall, or a solid door.
2. Hold the camera in a portrait orientation (not landscape).
3. Include head and shoulders within the frame, with some extra room at the top and sides.

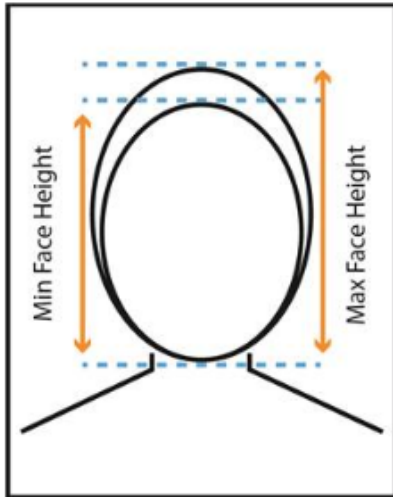


Photo Quality

1. Ensure that the photo is not blurry.
2. Ensure that the photo is neither too dark nor too bright.
3. Ensure that the lighting does not cause reflections in eye glasses.
4. Do not crop.
5. Do not use photo filters or effects.

20. What about other certifications that the Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals offers?

The Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals (the Ministry) is currently working to modernize and update other certifications such as Fireboss. A small fee will be charged once they have been updated to cover the cost to administer and continue to update those certifications.

The Ministry also offers the BC Mine Supervisor Certification program and the BC Mine Shiftboss Certifications, which are available online.

21. How long does it take to receive my certificate and secure ID card?

You can expect to receive your BC Mine Blaster Certification and secure ID card within 1 to 2 weeks after your interview.

If you need your certificate sooner, you can request a temporary PDF certificate. For assistance, please email Mine.Certifications@gov.bc.ca

22. What do I do if I lose or misplace my certificate or secure ID card?

Crown Publications can re-print and mail you a new certificate and secure ID card. A \$21 fee is charged to cover printing, shipping and handling to replace all BC Mine Blaster Certificates and secure ID cards.

Prior to contacting Crown Publications to submit your order, please ensure that your mailing address is up to date in your student record by contacting the Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals at Mine.Certifications@gov.bc.ca

23. What can I do if my BC Mine Blaster Certification is suspended or cancelled?

BC Inspectors of Mines have the authority under the [Mines Act](#) and [Code](#) to suspend your certificate for non-compliance, incompetence, or negligence.

If your certificate has been suspended or cancelled, you may appeal the decision within 30 days of being informed of the decision. All appeals will be heard by the Chief Inspector and/or the Board of Examiners depending on the certification and the authority under the *Mines Act* and Code.

To initiate an appeal, you must notify the Chief Inspector or the Board of Examiners in writing, including the reason(s) for the appeal. Include any supporting evidence with the appeal request. After receiving the request, the Chief Inspector and/or Board of Examiners will review the file. If deemed necessary, the Chief Inspector or Board of Examiners will schedule a meeting to hear your case.

A final, written decision will be made by the Chief Inspector and/or Board of Examiners.

24. I have a question that is not included in this FAQ. Who do I contact?

If you have any questions that have not been covered in this FAQ, please contact the Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals at Mine.Certifications@gov.bc.ca.