

News release

RIO TINTO MINERALS WINS 2008 GOVERNOR'S SAFETY & HEALTH AWARD *Local talc operation recognized as one of Montana's safest companies*

Three Forks, Montana, October 29, 2008 – Rio Tinto Minerals – a world leader in industrial minerals supply – was awarded the Governor's Award for Excellence in Workplace Safety and Health, Mining Division, for 2008. The Montana Department of Labor and Industry presented the award to the group's Three Forks talc milling operation at a ceremony held in early October. The Department has also posted billboards to recognize Rio Tinto Minerals, along with four other public and private organizations in Montana considered to be the state's safest.

Rio Tinto Minerals' Three Forks Operations recently achieved more than three years working without a lost time injury. Every employee at the operation plays a role in eliminating workplace injuries, and takes part in the training, safety interaction and proactive risk management programs that form the backbone of the team's health and safety program.

"We have made great progress toward maintaining a safe and healthy workplace, and are honored that our progress has been recognized by the Governor," said Jade Stokke, Manager, Three Forks Operations. "We are celebrating by renewing our commitment to eliminating injuries and illness, and by taking our commitment beyond our operations to our homes and communities."

Rio Tinto Minerals will host a community safety event, featuring motivational speaker Chad Hymas, on Thursday, October 30. Mr. Hymas has been named one of the 10 most inspirational people in the world by *The Wall Street Journal*. The event begins at 2:30 pm at the Three Forks High School Auditorium, and is free to the public.

Rio Tinto Minerals employs 175 people at its three talc operations in Montana – Yellowstone Operations, the largest talc mine in the United States; and Three Forks and Sappington Operations, world class talc processing plants. Three Forks Operations has been processing and packaging talc products at its current location since 1961. Today, Rio Tinto Minerals supplies talc products to paper, paint, polymers, ceramics and personal care products customers around the world from its operations in Montana, Vermont, Texas, Canada, Austria, Belgium, France, Italy, Spain and Australia.

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About Rio Tinto Minerals

Rio Tinto Minerals is a member of Rio Tinto, a leading international mining group. Rio Tinto Minerals encompasses 2,700 people working at 40 facilities on five continents to serve more than 2,500 direct customers worldwide. The organization supplies 20 percent of the global demand for talc, marketed under the *Luzenac* brand, and 40 percent of the global demand for borates, marketed under the *20 Mule Team Borax* brand. Rio Tinto Minerals is the acknowledged world leader in product quality, supply reliability and technical support – the services that create value for its customers and differentiate the organization from its competitors – and is an industry leader in continuously improving how its products and practices contribute to sustainable development.

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