Subsidence Encyclopedia Article

Subsidence

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Subsidence

To subside is to sink or fall. Subsidence is commonly associated with the lowering of the earth's surface due to actions that have occurred below the surface. Sometimes this is a natural phenomenon, such as the solubilizing and removal of minerals by water. When the underground support system is removed in the process, the surface of the land sinks to a new level. This often leads to a special topographic form known as Karst **topography**. Human activities that lead to the extraction of ores, minerals, and **fossil fuels** often lead to a weakened mineral structural support and subsidence of the surface of the earth. In the **arid** portions of the earth, extraction of water from sub-surface aquifers has led to subsidence of the earth's surface as well.