

STEPHEN KITCHEN:

FROM GEOLOGY TO PROJECT MANAGEMENT TO EMERGENCY TRAINING, IT'S ALL IN A DAY'S WORK.

To say that Stephen Kitchen wears many hats is an understatement. His title is Mine Geologist, Continuous Improvement Specialist and Emergency Response Team Coordinator at Westmoreland Mining LLC coal mine in Estevan, Saskatchewan. Kitchen makes it clear that no two days are exactly the same.

“My roles and responsibilities get mixed and matched throughout the day. For example, between the May long-weekend and Labour Day, I spend a lot more time on mine exploration and development. It's the main field season,” Kitchen says. “I oversee a junior mine geologist and a student, and drilling contractors at the Estevan mine and also at the Poplar River mine, located over two hours away near Coronach.”

When he wears his geologist hat, Kitchen's main goal is to update the mines' geological models, mapping, and the stated reserves and resources estimates. But that's only a small portion of the day. He is also part of the project management team. As a continuous improvement specialist, he helps both Estevan and Poplar River mines be more efficient and make coal mining more sustainable. “I look at ways to improve operational, maintenance, IT and financial aspects, without of course compromising safety,” says Kitchen.

Westmoreland supplies the coal used to generate power at SaskPower's Boundary Dam Power Station, home to the world's first commercial carbon capture operation.

“With today's climate change discussions and decarbonization, we have to find ways to use this resource sustainably. We optimize coal quality, to reduce its ash, sulfur and moisture content,” states Kitchen. “At our Estevan operation we also produce activated carbon and charcoal products, like

barbecue briquets, and we look for ways to increase yields so that our stakeholders have a sustainable supply.”

Kitchen doesn't end his day looking at improvement opportunities.

Since 2017, Kitchen has also been leading the Estevan mine Emergency Response Team. Although this is a volunteer position, it is quite demanding of his time.

“This is a really rewarding leadership opportunity. I get to learn very practical skills in emergency response with my

colleagues. I help the team with the day-to-day of training and making sure our team is prepared in case of an emergency and also to compete at the annual Saskatchewan Mining Emergency Response and Mine Rescue Skills Competition,” he says.

You would think that after those long days of moving from one project to the next, Kitchen would say that's enough. But no, the Estevan native, stays on after hours in the summer to help organize the site's annual golf tournament. “When I'm not at work, I'm either spending time with my girlfriend Mariah, and my Australian shepherd, or on the golf course,” he says. “I love sharing my passion for golf.”



Stephen Kitchen with his girlfriend Mariah and his Australian shepherd.

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