

Argentina suspends Canada's Barrick mining over spill

March 30 2017



San Juan's province Mining Minister Alberto Hensel (C) speaking during a press conference in San Juan, west of Argentina on March 30, 2017

Argentina suspended Canadian mining company Barrick Gold on Thursday after the firm admitted to a new spill at a mine in the Andes mountains, its third in two years.

Barrick said Wednesday that a pipeline at its Veladero gold and silver

mine had sprung a leak the day before, spilling liquid used in the mining process.

It insisted there were no [toxic chemicals](#) in the spill, but environmental groups called for the [company](#) to be banned.

The governor of the western province of San Juan, Sergio Unac, ordered Barrick to halt metal separating operations until the pipeline is repaired.

A local judge backed that up in a separate ruling, saying the repeated spills at the mine suggested a "failure of its hydraulic system."

In September 2015, the Veladero mine was hit by a million-liter (260,000-gallon) spill of cyanide solution.

Nine Barrick directors were charged over that spill, and the company had to pay a fine of \$9.3 million.

A year later there was another cyanide solution spill, though the company insisted none of it came into contact with water sources or drainage channels.

The Argentine environment ministry has sent a team of experts to investigate the latest [spill](#).

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