

Mineral Spotlight: Beryl: Aquamarine

This week's mineral of the week is beryl, specifically the aquamarine variety. Beryl is a beryllium aluminum silicate mineral whose crystals occur in columnar, hexagonal prisms. Prior to the early 1900's, its only use was as a gemstone. However, since then it has become a sought after ore of the rare element beryllium. Beryllium is used in aerospace, medical, nuclear, and other industries. In the nuclear industry, it is used to regulate neutron flow in beryllium moderated reactors.

Aquamarine can be found in pegmatitic dikes and as a byproduct of feldspar and mica mining. Mount Antero, which is in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, is a popular high-altitude location of pegmatite minerals like aquamarine.

This feature created by curator Andrew Mulder and posted on Dice Museum social media on 03/27/2023

