John began his mining career working with American Metals Climax and the Climax Mine near Leadville, Colorado in 1970. For the next twenty-five years he continued to work in underground metal mines throughout the United States with a brief, one-year, stint in Turkey. Following the closure of the White Pine Mine in Michigan in late 1995, John made the move to industrial minerals. As all of his former employers were now non-existent, he decided to see what the other side of metal/non-metal mining was all about. Over the next twelve years, he worked in underground limestone in Missouri and aggregates in Pennsylvania.

In 2008, John joined Wisconsin Industrial Sand and silica sand mining. Here, he was instrumental in the startup operations of two local mining and processing operations. With a retirement in July 2010 he began his association with the Goodhue County committee studying silica sand mining and processing and its possible affects on the public. As one of only two miners on the committee, John’s role was largely one of educator. This study was wrapped up in July, culminating in major changes to the county’s mining regulations that will not only provide protection to the citizens of Goodhue County and to the soon to arrive producers of silica sand but provide an effective medium for direct contact between citizens and the mining companies for a better communication, cooperation and success of all.