

Construction on Shale

Pennsylvanian shales and sandstones are seen in this outcrop on U.S. 23 in Boyd County in the Cumberland Plateau Region.

Shale is more erodible, less stable, and more impermeable to water than sandstone. A home-builder must know which rock lies at the home site.

Sandstone is a mixture of gray and brown. Shale may appear gray, blue, red, or green, depending on its chemistry.

Shales may shrink when dry and swell when wet, causing drainage, foundation, and slope stability problems.

Photo by Richard Smath, Kentucky Geological Survey.

