



February 3, 2006

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Bureau of Mine Safety
www.depweb.state.pa.us/minesafety

Safety Alert

In light of recent mine fatalities and a heightened awareness of mine safety, DEP's Bureau of Mine Safety and the Bureau of District Mining Operations request that all mining operators in Pennsylvania review and enforce the necessary standards and procedures to ensure the safety of your workers. The Department of Environmental Protection is requesting all mine operators to meet with your employees as soon as possible and discuss the following safety information to help prevent mine accidents and keep our miners safe.

- ✓ **Roof Control Plans** - All miners should be trained and given periodic re-training on the provisions of your approved roof control plan.
- ✓ **Emergency Response** - Mine operators should regularly review their emergency response procedures and conduct regular emergency response training for all miners. The plan should include procedures for an extensive evacuation from all areas of the mine. All miners should be aware of the storage locations for Self-Contained Self-Rescuers.
- ✓ **Safe Work Procedures** - Proper work procedures should be developed for all mining operations and reinforced often.
- ✓ **Call Before You Dig** - Review mine-permit maps showing the locations of pipelines and underground utilities. Contractors and mine operators must call 1-800-2480-1786 at least 3 days before digging or excavating to verify the locations of gas lines and prevent damage of underground utilities. Recently a fatality occurred when an equipment operator intersected a natural gas line causing a fire.
- ✓ **Mine Examinations** - The first step to preventing mine accidents is conducting thorough mine examinations and gas checks. All mine examiners should review their job duties regularly with the Mine Foreman and be aware of the necessity of reporting their findings and taking appropriate action if a hazardous condition exists.
- ✓ **Fire Suppression and Mine Monitoring Systems** - Ensure that all fire suppression systems and mine monitoring systems are operational and in compliance with the approved plan and have been periodically checked and tested.
- ✓ **Electrical Safety** - All metal structures and equipment located on the surface should be electrically isolated from the underground mine. Ensure that there is electrical separation between the surface grounding grid and the mine electrical system grounding grid.
- ✓ **Belt Drives and Conveyor Belts** - Inspect all belt drives and conveyor belts for damage or wear and correct any potential safety hazards immediately. Recent accidents have reinforced the need for clean and well rock-dusted belt conveyor entries. Proper maintenance of all mechanical components is vital to safe operation.

DEP Toll-Free Emergency Response Number - 24 Hours Per Day

1-800-541-2050