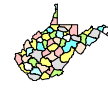




MINER DETAILS



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BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP

From the Director's Office Employee of the Quarter

The second quarter winner this year is Tom Harmon of the Oak Hill office. Tom has 23 years with the agency and is an electrical inspector at the Region 4 office. Tom also has worked as a regular inspector before becoming an electrical inspector. Tom is always pleasant and ready to help others. Skilled in woodcrafts, he likes building things with his hands. He will now automatically be nominated for consideration of the Agency Employee of the Year, to be awarded in March 2003. On behalf of the selection committee, I would like to congratulate Tom Harmon for being our Employee of the Second Quarter 2002.



Did You Know?

Third Fatal Accident

The third fatal accident that occurred in West Virginia this year involved a continuous miner operator. Accident investigators report that the miner operator was in a safe location during the turning of a right crosscut until a shuttle car broke down under the continuous miner boom. At this time, the miner operator entered the Danger Zone (the area between the first and second rows of roof bolts outby the unsupported roof) to get a bottle of water from the shuttle car, when a section of the mine roof fell on the victim. One of the means to prevent reoccurrence was

to increase the number of reflectors from two to five to be posted at the entrance to the unsupported roof. The location of these reflectors is two outby, two inby, and one near the center line of the crosscut prior to mining of the crosscut. (location of five reflectors is shown by arrows in the following illustration.)



The depth of the first cut in any crosscut is also being evaluated, as it may be a contributing factor to the accidents that our continuous miner operators are experiencing. It is thought by some that miner operators may be exposing themselves to the unsupported roof while checking centers when turning 90° breaks and trying to avoid being struck by the advancing shuttle car. Reduced cut depths, for the first cut in a turned crosscut has been discussed. A maximum cut depth of 10 feet has been evaluated, but this may cause the miner operator to complete the turning of the crosscut with a second cut. This may expose the operator to the unsupported roof twice in the same crosscut. Evaluations have shown that a cut depth of 20 feet can be safely mined from outby the entrance to the crosscut. This allows the miner operator to see the cut process and reduces the exposure of the operator to the unsupported area.

This would only apply to the first cut in turning a crosscut. If the first cut of a crosscut can be mined head on, an extended depth cut could be mined without exposing the miner operator to hazards of turning crosscuts. The cross cut process will be evaluated at each operation and the depth of the cut determined on a mine-to-mine basis.

Inside this Newsletter:

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How Pressure Produces Electricity

Whenever you speak into a telephone, or other type of microphone, the pressure waves of the sound energy move a diaphragm. In some cases, the diaphragm moves a coil of wire past a magnet, generating electrical energy, which is transmitted through wires to a receiver. Microphones used with public address systems and radio transmitters sometimes operate on this principle. Other microphones, however, convert the pressure waves of sound directly into electricity. Also, crystals of certain materials will develop electrical charges if a pressure is exerted on them. Quartz, tourmaline, and Rochelle salts are materials, which illustrate this principle of pressure as a source of electricity. This is the final of a six-part series of articles on how electricity is produced. Jim Berry, Electrical

Inspector, Region Three, presented these articles. Thanks Jim.

Agency Accomplishments Changes in Penalty Assessments

As of July 1, 2002 operator penalty assessments will include a new category for assessing penalty points. The new section is Negligence and carries scores from 0 to 20 points. Also, the Likelihood and Severity penalty sections had some point modifications. The Penalty Point Conversion Table was revised, which now has a maximum penalty of \$3000 for 100 points. The lowest assessed penalty is now \$60.00. The only change to the IPA system is the Point Conversion Table, with the minimum fine now set at \$50.00, while the maximum is still \$250.

As a result of these changes, the Notice of Violation (18) form was revised and all inspectors should be using the new forms. Do not use the old forms any longer. As soon as possible turn in all paperwork issued using the old forms.

Pre-Shift Examiner Contest

Something new this year at the State Mine Rescue First-Aid and Bench Contest will be the addition of the Pre-Shift Examiner contest. If you have an opportunity to watch this event, it should be interesting.

Mine Inspectors Examination

On June 27 – 28, the WV Mine Inspectors Examining Board conducted examinations for Mine Inspector and Safety Instructor at the National Mine Academy. A total of 58 applications were received and 37 examinations were given (21 underground, 4 surface, 5 electrical, and 7 instructor).

2001 Annual Report

The 2001 Annual Report and Directory of Mines is now available. Regional Offices will be supplied with copies for their employees and the public.

Coal Festival

June 17 – 22 MHS&T sponsored an informational booth at the Boone County Coal Festival in Madison, WV. MHS&T

employees answered questions and handed out souvenirs to visitors. Special thanks should be given to Joe Atha who organized the MHS&T efforts and the other employees who participated.

For Your Information PEIA

PEIA insurance premiums increased effective July 1. Expect a \$25 to \$70 per-month increase, with the average being about \$35. Fortunately, this is somewhat offset by the \$805 (\$67 per month) pay increase also effective July 1.

Off The Bookshelf

This month we celebrated the July 4th holiday, honoring the birth of our nation 226 years ago. For those of you interested in how and why the United States became a nation, historical novelist Jeff Sharra has written an excellent book titled, *Rise to Rebellion*. This book details the actions leading to the issuance of the Declaration of Independence. The story is told through the eyes of many of the key participants on both sides including Adams, Franklin, Washington and British General Gage. Reading *Rise to Rebellion*, will give you a deep appreciation for the courage and struggles the founders of our nation went through to set the stage for independence.

Books on Tape

Many of our inspectors and others within MHS&T who spend a lot of time driving to and from work are listening to books on tape. These tapes can be checked out from the local library. The Raleigh County public library, for example, has everything from the old classics to very recent publications. This is a great way to break up the monotony of driving and contribute to your alertness while traveling each day. The books on tape range from a few hours to a dozen hours to complete a book. It is usually possible to complete one or two books per week. We would like to recommend *Frankenstein*, or *A Tale of Two Cities*, or the leather stocking series by James F. Cooper,

a classic series of early American books written in the early 1800's.

Sales Tax Holiday

What is a sales tax holiday? The Governor's proposed sales tax holiday will be a three-day period during the first weekend in August where no sales tax is charged on school supplies and clothing. Many families in West Virginia are struggling to make ends meet.

Families will be able to purchase clothing and school supplies up to \$100 per item without paying a sales tax. For additional information, and a list of exempt items, go to the tax web site at: www.state.wv.us/taxrev/taxholiday

Up Close and Personal

James "Paw Paw" Mathews, Surface Inspector in Region 3 retired June 30, 2002 with 10 years service. Good Luck Paw Paw!

Steven Michael Rutledge, son of Mike Rutledge received the Promise Scholarship and will be attending WVU in the fall. Congratulations Stevie!

Ronald L. Harris, former Director and current safety instructor has resigned from the agency with over 29 years of public service. Good Luck Ron!



**Summer at a West Virginia
swimming hole.**

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the WV Office of MHS&T
Governor Bob Wise
Doug Conaway, Director
Contact Person: Dave Kessler
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