



MINER DETAILS



Volume 8 Issue 2 WV Office of Miners' Health, Safety & Training April 2003

BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP

From the Director's Office

Pre-shift Examiner Contest

The first West Virginia Pre-shift Examiner Championship was held March 28, 2003 at the National Mine Health and Safety Academy in Beckley, WV. The West Virginia Holmes Safety Association sponsored the contest. Winners from earlier pre-shift contests were urged to attend, and a total of fourteen individuals participated. The first place winner was Mike Plumley from US Steel Mining Co. Director Conaway presented Plumley with the First Place trophy. Second place went to Greg Neil from Independence Coal Co. Rounding out the top three finishers was Robert Stafford from Eastern Associated Coal Corp. We wish to congratulate not only the winners but also all contestants who participated and those individuals who organized and ran these contests. Pre-shift contests will become an integral part of future Mine Rescue contests and plans are in the works for a pre-shift contest at the National Mine Rescue contest.

Agency Accomplishments

Underground Inspector and Safety Instructor Tests

The West Virginia Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training announced April 7th 2003, that applications to take the examinations for the positions of Underground Mine Inspector and Safety Instructor are now being accepted. All applications MUST be received no later than 4:00 p.m. Friday, May 23, 2003 to be considered by the Mine Inspectors Examining Board for this examination. Applicants will be notified of the examination time and place. Additional information and application forms may be downloaded from our website at

www.state.wv.us/mhst or contact Tina Estep Bowles in the Charleston Office at 558-1425 extension 21.

Mine Map Archives

In July, 2002 the nation sat riveted to telecasts of the dramatic rescue of 9 miners trapped underground by a catastrophic inundation of water at the Quecreek Mine in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. Miners operating powerful continuous mining machines inadvertently cut into the adjacent flooded mine works of an abandoned coal mine and nine shivering men remained trapped for four days while company and government crews worked feverishly to rescue them. Fortunately, this story had a happy ending.

However, the potential for similar accidents exists in every state in the nation where coal is mined. Responding to the call to redouble efforts to improve accessibility to and completeness of the archives of maps for abandoned coal mines, the Office of Miners', Health, Safety and Training has launched an ambitious campaign to ensure that the mine mapping records available to West Virginia citizens are both complete and accessible. This includes not only making sure copies of all known maps are available for inspection, but potential sources of additional maps are being hunted down and catalogued.

The Charleston Office has recently made additional investments in personnel and in computer hardware and software to make it easier for mine operators and the general public to find the maps they need and to print copies to take with them. MHS&T is also working closely with the West Virginia Geologic and Economic

Survey to post this information on the internet for even greater access. In addition, new technologies are being evaluated for their application to assist in detecting mine voids before they are encountered in mining.

Inside this Newsletter:

- **From the Director's Office**
- **Agency Accomplishments**
- **Did You Know?**
- **For Your Information**
- **Up Close and Personal**

Did You Know?

Health Notes

"Who me? I'm not obese."

A November 2002 survey by Oxford Health Plans Inc., found that nearly one in five American workers has a very distorted view of his/her behavior and the health risks it poses. While proclaiming their health to be excellent (rated 9 or 10 on a 1-10 scale) those workers tend to be at least 25 pounds overweight (55%) smoke (31%) each day drink three or more glasses of alcohol (21%) and four or more cups of coffee or tea (29%) and never exercise (36%). In addition, they are the least likely workers to eat a balanced breakfast (25%) but are among the most likely to eat fried foods (24%) and salty/sugary snacks (26%).

At the same time, those employees who actually maintain healthy lifestyle habits such as frequent exercise and good diet endure the least amount of workplace stress and are the most motivated at work (8.9 on a 10 point scale). They are the least likely to lose sleep over their jobs (10 %) and least likely to miss personal or family activities due to work (13%).

Mining Near Old Works

Be sure to check mine maps during inspections to see if the working sections are near old works, oil or gas wells or outcrops. Remember that a permit is required “in hand” to mine within 200 feet of a gas or oil well. A well permit assures you that the oil and gas inspector has been out to the well and has made sure the well is properly plugged or prepared for nearby mining. Timbering or reduced entry widths should begin when a working place is within 150 feet of the outcrop. Assure that water will not flood the section if cutting out into a hollow or creek. Boreholes must be kept 20 feet in advance of a working face anytime the face is within 50 feet of certified old works that cannot be examined or 200 feet of uncertified old works that cannot be examined. Three holes are required for each face, one left, one right, and one straight ahead. Holes must be drilled deep enough to prove that 20 feet of solid coal will remain after the completed cut. Interview the mine foreman of nearby active mines in seams above or below to help gain an understanding of water and ventilation conditions that might affect both mines. Ask your supervisor for help if you have any doubts.

For Your Information

Consol Uses Jet Engine to Fight Mine Fire

A mine fire continues to burn in the Loveridge 22 mine of Consolidation Coal in Marion County. Work is on going to use a jet engine from a Russian MIG 15 plane to provide an inert atmosphere to smother the fire. Fourteen members of Queensland Mine Rescue Service of Australia are operating the engine. The specially tuned engine produces 65,000 cfm of airflow that is cooled and made very inert with high nitrogen and carbon dioxide levels.



The inert atmosphere is being forced into the mine slope and is pushing over the fire. The work is promising good results.

McDowell Bolt Reduces Roof Control Problems

A mine in the Danville Region was experiencing roof control problems traced to horizontal roof stress. It was decided that a fully grouted tensional rebar type roof bolt would correct the problem. The mine had been reporting two and three roof falls per week prior to the use of this bolt and now reports one or two roof falls per month. The roof bolt is manufactured by Excel Mining and is referred to as their McDowell bolt. It has been used in the industry for several years. This type of bolt was used with a shear pin or a tab in the end of the nut that allowed the resin to be mixed before the pin or tab sheared allowing the nut to tighten. When the mine began using these 6' bolts, the design was changed to stop the pieces of broken pins and tabs from plugging the bolt machine dust suction. The threaded end of the bolt was battered to swell the end of the bolt and keep the nut from backing off, allowing a counter clockwise spin of the bolt to mix the resin. After a few seconds, the bolt would then be rotated in a clockwise direction to tighten the bolt to a very high torque. Occasionally a nut would over ride the swelled end and come off of the bolt. To correct this problem, Excel began pinching the threaded end to keep the nut from coming off. When this was done, several nuts began breaking when tightened. Excel changed from a nut that was marked Excel Tab to a stronger nut marked as XL-6 and a larger deformation that seems to have corrected this problem.



What's Cooking

Nieman Marcus Cake

1 box yellow cake mix
1 stick butter, softened
5 eggs
1 tsp. Vanilla extract
1 c. chopped pecans
2 (8 oz.) pkgs. Cream cheese, room temperature
1 lb. Powdered sugar
Preheat oven to 300°. Combine cake mix, butter, 1 egg, vanilla extract and pecans. Pat the mixture into a 9 x 13 inch pan. With cream cheese at room temperature, beat until smooth while adding remaining eggs one at a time. Gradually add sugar and beat for 5 minutes. Pour on top of mixture and bake 55 to 60 minutes.

Insurance Update

Remember to read and review your Shoppers' Guide. March 31 through May 2 is the open window allowing you to change your insurance. Be watching for your “tobacco – free” forms and be sure to send them to the proper address.

Up Close and Personal

Tina Estep Bowles is doing well and has returned to work after her illness. We certainly are glad to have her back



This newsletter is published bimonthly by the WV Office of MHS&T
Governor Bob Wise
Doug Conaway, Director
Contact Person: Dave Kessler
Visit the agency's website at:

www.state.wv.us/mhst

