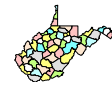




MINER DETAILS



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BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP

Agency Accomplishments

Mobile Electrical Training Unit

Thanks to the tireless efforts of Tom Harmon, Electrical Inspector of Oak Hill Region, MHS&T now has a new "classroom on wheels". Our agency is now equipped with a 24 by 8½ foot pull-behind trailer designed for teaching apprentice and qualified electrical personnel at the mine site. The trailer is equipped with heat, lights, air conditioning, dry-erase boards and a table with chairs. It includes cabinets to store training materials and electrical handouts. Since October 04, Tom and others on the electrical inspection staff have logged over 3500 hours training electricians how to properly ground fault power centers, trouble shoot electrical problems, and perform mine-wide electrical evaluations/calculations.

The hands-on training is being very well received by the students. More than 60,000 copies of Tom's electrical calculations handbook are now in circulation. The classroom has both a high-voltage power center simulator and a high-voltage substation simulator that are used to set up any electrical fault condition that might be encountered by the electrician. Our agency has shared this "mobile classroom" idea with MSHA and mining agencies of surrounding states including Ohio, Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, Pennsylvania and others as far away as Wyoming. The other states and MSHA all show interest in modeling their electrical training plans after the West Virginia mobile classroom. Guidelines are being developed to begin electrical trouble-shooting contests in the near future that will incorporate the mobile electrical training unit. The contests will be sponsored by our agency and the Holmes Safety

Association. Tom will also be using the classroom to train state and federal electrical inspectors during 2005 electrical retraining classes at the Mining Academy. When we caught up with Tom, he and Bobby Thornsby were just returning from Consol's operations near Fairmont. They had completed training 22 apprentice electricians and 33 qualified electricians. Keep up the good work!



Inside this Newsletter:

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Mountaineer Guardian Awards

The 2004 Mountaineer Guardian Awards were presented at the 32nd Annual West Virginia Mining Symposium (sponsored by the West Virginia Coal Association Inc.) on February 17, 2005 during a

luncheon ceremony. The winner of the 2004 Barton B. Lay Jr. Milestones of Safety Award was Fola Coal Co., Inc., Peach Orchard Plant. Listed below are the other award winners.

| COMPANY | FACILITY |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Consolidation Coal Co. | Robinson Run |
| Consolidation Coal Co. | Loveridge No. 22 |
| Baylor Mining, Inc. | Jim's Branch No. 3A |
| Bluestone Coal Corp. | Pinnacle Ridge |
| Eastern Associated Coal Corp | Harris No. 1 |
| Long Branch Energy | Mine No. 18 |
| Arch of West Virginia, Inc. | Guyan |
| Thunderhill Coal Co., Inc. | Callisto Mine |
| Kingston Mining, Inc. | Glen Alum Mine |
| White Buck Coal Co. | White Buck No. 2 |
| Marfork Coal Co., Inc. | White Queen |
| Powellton Coal Co., LLC | Bridge Fork No. 1 |
| Keystone Industries, LLC | Rush Creek Surface |
| Roblee Coal Co. | Jess Run Prep Plant |
| Coal River Processing, LLC | Fork Creek Prep Plant |
| Hampden Coal Co. | No. 1 Prep Plant |
| Pond Fork Processing Corp | Pond Fork Processing |
| Amherst Industries, Inc. | Port Amherst |
| J. F. Allen Company Aggregates | Quarry |
| Powell Construction, Inc. | Contractor |

Study Guides On-line

Revised versions of the 80 and 40 Hour Pre-employment Study Guides are now available on-line as downloads from our web site. We hope to add additional guides such

as Belt Examiner and Shot Firer in the near future.

Did You Know?

Mine Foreman Examination

Did you know that tests for Mine Foreman certification were once conducted in the basement of the Capital? The picture below is from the 1948 Department of Mines Annual Report and shows a test being administered in an examination room in the basement of the Capital.



Mine Rescue Apparatus

MHS&T has purchased 16 new BG-4 Self Contained Oxygen Breathing Apparatus. All members of the state team have undergone user and level II technician training. The apparatus are stored on the new rescue truck. These are a great improvement over the old 174 models. The new apparatus are positive pressure to ensure no contaminated atmosphere can reach the user. In addition, the new units are lighter and more comfortable to wear. Cooled air is provided by an ice pack inside the machine. All team members like the new apparatus.

For Your Information

Diesel Update

Approximately 30 diesel – powered pieces of equipment have been approved for operation in West Virginia mines. These include AL Lee forklifts and rubber-tired and rail personnel carriers, Getman motor graders and tractors, Wallace Mantrips, and Brookville personnel carriers and tractors. One coal company in the Danville Region, Aracoma, is expecting 19 new diesel vehicles. Another mining company, Mettike, expects to bring a fleet of older Eimco 913 and 915 diesel scoops into the eastern panhandle after retrofitting them to meet WV emission standards. They also plan to equip military surplus

Hummers with modern approved engine packages for use as mantrips. Altogether they plan to have 21 pieces of diesel equipment for new mines being opened in the Fairmont Region. Diesels are well on the way.

Equipment is being purchased to make frequent emission tests as more diesel-powered equipment arrives at the mines. This equipment includes heat guns, exhaust gas analyzers, five-gas detectors, flame arrestor pin gauges, and smoke dot testers. Plans are to initially equip each regional office with one complete set of the necessary test equipment and provide instrument training for the diesel inspectors.

For Your Health

Life Decisions

There have been several stories and articles recently concerning end-of-life decisions. For those who want to make their wishes clear, there are a number of web sites that offer forms and advice for living wills and medical powers of attorney. Here are several: endoflife.org, agingwithdignity.org and compassionandchoices.org. These decisions are not just for the elderly, young people need to make their wishes known as well.

What is Methamphetamine?

If you have turned on a television or read a newspaper in the past year, it is obvious that meth labs are a problem in our communities. The last meeting of the Holmes Safety Association (Aracoma Council) Logan County, Chief Deputy V.K. Dingess was the guest speaker and provided the following information. Methamphetamine, C.S.A. Schedule II, is a potent central system stimulant. Meth is smoked, snorted, injected or administered orally. Users refer to Meth as “crank,” “speed,” “crystal,” and “ice.” Signs of Meth use: dilated pupils, dry mouth, flushed skin and tremors. Users may also exhibit: aggressive and psychotic behavior, irritability, anxiety, paranoia and hallucinations. Signs of a Meth Lab: Frequent visitors at all times of the day or night. Activity at the

house is usually at odd hours or late at night. Occupants appear unemployed; yet seem to have plenty of money and pay bills with cash. Occupants are unfriendly and appear secretive about activities. Occupants watch cars suspiciously when they pass by. Occupants display a paranoid or odd behavior. Extensive security at the home or signs that indicate “Private Property” or “Beware of Dog”, fences, large shrubs, bushes and trees. Windows blackened or curtains always drawn. Occupants go outside the house to smoke cigarettes. Chemical odors coming from the house, garbage or detached buildings. Coffee filters, bed sheets or other material stained from filtering red phosphorus or other chemicals. Occupant sets his garbage for pick up in another neighbor’s collection area. Evidence of chemical or waste dumping (i.e. burn pits or “dead spots” in the yard.

Up Close and Personal

Benny Larry, former mine foreman examiner, for the Department of Mines, passed away recently. Our condolences go out the family. His son, **John Larry**, District Inspector Region 1, retired effective April 1. District Inspectors **Melvin Chaffin** (Region 3) and **Gene Kirk** (Region 2) resigned recently. Best of wishes to all!



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Visit the agency's website at:

www.wvminesafety.org

