

MINER DETAILS

Volume 4 Issue 4

MINERS' HEALTH, SAFETY & TRAINING

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BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP

From The Director's Office

We started our new fiscal year on July 1st. Through the efforts of Gary Ball, Art Shumate, and Jeff Robinett, we received a budget that will allow us to provide extra services to the mining industry and make our jobs more meaningful. We have just completed a training video on conveyor belt safety and should have a roof control safety video completed in the next couple of weeks. These training materials can have an important safety impact on the miners that use them. Our goal is to make these available to every miner in West Virginia and miners from other states.

We recently shared with MSHA what we have been doing with our training program associated with deep-cut mining. MSHA was impressed and wanted to tape our program for use nationwide. The video should be released in the next few weeks. Special thanks go to Kevin Betler for the good job he did on the video. Also, special recognition goes to the Buckhannon office for all the effort in developing this much needed training course. We are also working on a Dozer Stockpile safety video, which should be available in the next few weeks. The agency can be proud of these new training tools and the effect they can have on safety.

On a sad note, on July 22nd at 3:00 a.m., we experienced our 5th mining fatality of the year. The accident occurred in a Harrison County mine. The victim, a roof bolter operator, was installing roof bolts when a large piece of mine roof fell. The victim had ten years

mining experience with two years experience at this mine. Three of these fatalities have occurred on the surface, and two underground. This was the first roof fall fatality of 1999. In addition to using our time at the mine for inspections, let's also concentrate on talking to all miners about the importance of mining according to the approved plans. **Ron Harris, Director**

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Agency Accomplishments

Fire Extinguishers & First Aid Kit

I hope each of you received your fire extinguisher and first-aid kits. With the many miles we travel, we need to have fire-fighting and first-aid equipment in order to respond to an emergency. Let's hope we never need to use either of these items. **Ron**

Children's Activity Booklet

As an outgrowth of the "Stay Out Stay Alive" children's safety program, MHS&T has developed an activity book for elementary age children. The title of the booklet is Coal Mining Counts and is the first of two editions. Coal Mining Counts is intended to help the young people of WV learn more about the coal industry and its importance to West Virginia.

This first volume focuses mainly on the activities and equipment associated with surface mines. The second volume will be focused toward underground mining. In the first volume, we meet Smiley the Rock Truck who takes the reader on a tour of a surface mine and introduces other surface mining equipment such as Eddie the End Loader and Sherry the Shovel. He describes the job functions of each machine and how the mining process works. The booklet also has several informational pages for the teacher or parent, drawings suitable for coloring, a word-search puzzle, WV coal facts, and even has directions on how to grow a coal garden. We plan to distribute the booklets to elementary schools and during the state fair and Bridge Day. Thanks go to Garry McComas, Tina Estep, and Dave Kessler for their efforts in producing this booklet.

For Your Information

SCSR Problems

MSHA and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) have identified two problems with Osenco, Inc.'s EBA 6.5 self-contained self-rescuer (SCSR). They say that instructions are not adequate to allow a person to quickly and easily open the rescuer. Also, the breathing resistance when exhaling may be above the approved limits on some units. Osenco plans to change instructions for opening the SCSR by having persons to "sharply" pull apart the two handle loops of the rescuer. To continue certification of the rescuer, the manufacturer must identify the cause of increased breathing resistance and

take measures to quickly address this problem. Tests have shown however, that the Osenco SCSR will continue to function and will provide protection to the miner even with the increased breathing resistance.

For Your Health

Skin Cancer - The Facts

By the year 2001, 1 of every 90 people in the US will get malignant melanoma. The United Kingdom figure is 1 of every 150-200. Melanomas can spread two ways: horizontally, which gives rise to the superficial spreading melanoma, or they can grow downwards and the cells will invade the lymph glands, which is much more dangerous. There is strong evidence that melanomas occur on sun-damaged skin and that people are particularly at risk when they have sudden, short bursts of sunlight on holidays in places where the sun is very strong. People most at risk from melanoma include those (1) with a high number of moles, (2) with red or fair hair, blue eyes, fair skin and freckles, (3) who tan with difficulty and burn in the sun, and (4) with a history of the disease in two or more family members. More women than men get melanomas. This form of cancer occurs mainly in the 40-60 year age group, but it can strike at any age. However, children are rarely affected.

A tan is not a sign of health, it is a sign that the skin has been damaged by ultraviolet radiation. When the sun damages cells, melanin rushes to the surface to provide protection against the next onslaught. As you slowly build up a 'protective tan', your skin is darkening in response to damage on top of damage.

Although melanomas can affect most parts of the body, the most common place for women to get them is on the legs, while in men, it is on the trunk, particularly on the back.

Get to know your skin and report

any changes to the doctor. If you have a mole or spot, look for the ABCD warning signs of cancer: Asymmetry, Irrregular Borders, Color that is not uniform or is black, and Diameter larger than a pencil eraser.

If detected early skin cancer has a 99% cure rate.

Did You Know?

Mark Your Calendars!

The Annual Staff Meeting is scheduled for September 9th and 10th at the MSHA Academy.

EPICS Payroll System

The process of converting our agency to **Employees Payroll Information System (EPICS)** is now complete. Please review your deductions on both checks in the month of July and if you have any questions or concerns please call Marti Sigmon.

MHS&T Films

Has MHS&T gone Hollywood? Not quite, but we are producing several training films. The latest addition to the Pathways to Safety series is Conveyor Belt Safety. This is the fourth volume in the series. The first three are Electrical, Lockout, Surface Haulage, and Smoking in Underground Mines.

These films are a valuable new resource for training classes and safety programs, and have been well received by the industry. Two additional volumes are in various stages of production. Roof Control is in editing and Surface Blasting is in the script stage.

These films will be available in each regional office. For more information, contact either Mike Rutledge or Terry Farley.

BIT/JSA Training

Each MHS&T inspector recently contacted at least forty-two miners and instructed them that carrying smoking articles inside a mine was both dangerous and illegal. Each miner received a sticker cautioning against smoking in mines. The

safety training seemed well received by the miners and many promptly placed the sticker upon their safety helmets.

Home Cookin'

Chunky Vegetable Soup

Ingredients: Leftover beef roast or two cans of Armor roast beef, two quarts of canned tomatoes, two beef bouillon cubes, one tablespoon garlic powder, one chopped green pepper (optional), four large carrots, four large potatoes, one can of peas, one can of whole corn, one can of green beans, and one large chopped onion. Salt and pepper to taste.

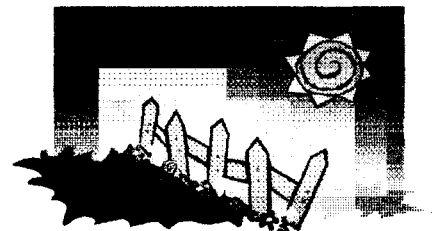
Directions: Cut carrots and potatoes into large, one-inch pieces. Brown chopped onion with meat, then add tomatoes, bouillon cubes, carrots, and potatoes. Cook soup until potatoes are tender. Add peas, corn, and beans, salt and pepper, and then simmer until soup is thick and well cooked.

Up Close and Personal

Bill Tankersley from the Buchannon office spends his leisure time deer and turkey hunting, and trout fishing with his three grandchildren. He also enjoys car shows and repairing cars and motorcycles.

Albert Kirchartz from the Fairmont office spends his leisure time woodworking and gardening.

John Larry from the Fairmont office spends his leisure time at antique shows, golfing, and vacationing at Myrtle Beach, SC and Williamsburg, VA.



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