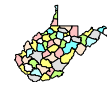




MINER DETAILS



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BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP

Agency Accomplishments Electrical Calculation Handbook by Tom Harmon

Our agency realized that a lack of quality training existed in properly calculating the requirements of electrical motor circuits serving mining equipment both underground and on the surface in West Virginia. This was of major concern due to the number of electrical motor circuits in use today in the mining industry such as conveyor belt drives, dewatering pumps, and electrically-driven hydraulic equipment.

Without proper compliance to the pertinent requirements associated with electrical equipment, a fire hazard exists possibly resulting in a serious mine fire or disaster.

MHS&T has been developing pre-calculated charts and forms, seeking to help bring uniformity and compliance of the electrical requirements throughout the mining industry.

A pocket size notebook, using a standard spread sheet format, has been developed from these charts and forms as well as a workbook for classroom training. A standard form is now used to document the requirements of existing electrical installations or to pre-plan an installation. This eliminates the use of other reference materials, calculations, cross-referencing and possible misinterpretation of information.

Since March of this year, 5,000 copies of the booklet have been distributed, with several other states using this program with great results.

Mine Mapping Update

Checklists have been developed for both active and final mine mapping. It is hoped that these checklists will standardize the submittal of all maps to MHS&T.

In reviews of maps filed during the last year, several deficiencies were noted. The new guidelines address areas such as the elevation of water pools in the mine, more accurate mine location information as well as more extensive surface detail. The new checklists will soon be available on our website.

Efforts are continuing to collect and index as many mine maps as possible. We recently digitized a collection of quadrangle maps from the 1930s, which identify many mines from that era. We have also digitized many maps from private sources. The digitized maps allow immediate cross-referencing and computerized printing of these old maps, helping relate the old works to modern mine workings. This should help prevent mine flooding accidents as occurred in PA earlier this year.

Inside this Newsletter:

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Did You Know?

Mining Near Oil and Gas Wells

Mining near or through oil or gas wells is an ever-present fire and explosion hazard to coal miners. Oil and gas wells must be shown on mine maps so check regularly and keep yourself informed about the plans for mining near any projected wells. Remember a permit is required from MHS&T to mine within 200 feet or through a well. All wells will need to be prepared ahead of time to reduce the hazard to the miners. Typically, the mine owner must purchase any active well, then hire a well drilling contractor to bleed off the gas, remove the well casing,

and cement the well closed. Problems occur when old, worked-out wells have been abandoned for many years and must be relocated on the surface. Usually, the coal operator must search well records in the Division of Oil and Gas to gather location and plugging information about a specific abandoned well. A survey crew will then look for the well in the woods and mark an approximate location. A temporary access road must usually be built and an excavator is often used to "look" for the well and prepare a drilling site. Finally, the drilling contractor brings in a rig to drill out old cement plugging or mill out metal from the old well to a point 200 feet below the coal seam. Explosives are then used to cut the well casing(s) which are lifted out joint by joint or to perforate those casings that cannot be retrieved. This allows the expanding concrete to completely seal the well making it safer for the nearby mining. Shown here is one type of milling bit used to cut up trash metal from an old well. Many other shapes are used including a taper-bottom, a flat-bottom, and a cone-shaped bottom milling bit.



Influenza

With the current flu outbreak the following article from MSN.com is very timely.

"The season for colds is also the season for [influenza](#). What's the difference? Well, flu is characterized by a rapid onset, and the viruses that cause it are far

more contagious than those that cause colds. Why? Flu passes from person to person through the air, while the cold virus is spread primarily by contact. Flu is also much more dangerous than a cold. Colds account for more illness than all other human diseases combined, but the flu is the 5th leading cause of death in the United States. Every 30 years or so, a new flu strain pops up and creates a [pandemic](#), which is like an epidemic only bigger. In 1918 an outbreak of Spanish flu swept the globe and killed some 20 million people worldwide. Fortunately, you can get a shot that pretty much protects you against flu for a year.”

<http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/Colu/mns/?Article=sicklyseason>

For Your Information

Underground Diesel Equipment

This year, approval for the first two pieces of underground diesel equipment was issued. Pine Ridge Coal Company, Big Mountain operation, began using a diesel grader to work the underground supply and mantrip roadways. Representatives of this mine feel that this proved to be more help than anticipated. The heavy rains of this past year has produced more water in the mine and caused more work to maintain the roadways. The diesel grader is capable of working a full shift, whereas the battery scoops required battery changing and more maintenance. Rivers Edge Coal Company began using a diesel mantrip in 2003. The mantrip carries 14 passengers up a 10-degree slope without any problems. It was also stated that the design of the mantrip allowed a more comfortable position of passengers and allowed the office buildings and change areas to be located a greater distance from the portals. This gave more area near the portals for storage of supplies and any other work that may need to be performed. Neither mine has experienced problems with the diesel equipment. Routine maintenance is the only work that has been required to this point. Representatives of NIOSH and the WV Diesel Commission are scheduled to visit these operations

Dec. 11, 2003 for a closer look at the use of diesel equipment in underground mines. Terry Hudson of Peabody Coal Co., has recently been appointed to the WV Diesel Commission.

The Clay Center for the Arts & Sciences.

The Clay Center, located in Charleston is a unique new facility combining the performing arts, science museum, and art museum. The center is over 240,000 square feet and features state of the art multi-media systems. The performance hall, new home to the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra, seats 1,882 while the science museum has interactive exhibits throughout its' two floors. The center also has a planetarium, gift shop and Café. For anyone interested in visiting the Center during the holidays, check their website at:

Miner Details goes Online!

In an effort to save money and keep up with all the agencies are doing, we will no longer be sending your Newsletter in the mid-month paycheck. This is the last mailed issued after 8 years, so maybe you will want to same this one (Vol. 8 Issue 6). Starting with the January 2004 issue, we will post a copy of the newsletter in full color on our agency website www.wvminesafety.org. We will send an electronic version to your regional office where it will be downloaded and distributed. Plans are for you to receive a copy in your office mailbox.

Interesting Facts about West Virginia

During the Cold War, a sprawling 112,000 sq. ft. Bomb shelter was built to shelter members of Congress in the event of a nuclear attack. It's located beneath the famous Greenbrier Resort in White Sulphur Springs, WV.

White Sulphur Springs has the only private residence in the U.S. that is made of coal.

In 1921, West Virginia became the first state to have a sales tax.

St. Andrews Methodist Church in Grafton was the site of the first Mother's Day celebration in 1908.

Two West Virginia men have built castles for their wives. – Steven Elkins built “Halliehurst” in 1890 for his wife Hallie Davis Elkins. In 1885, whiskey distiller Taylor Suite began building Berkley Castle for his new bride, Rosa Pelham, who was 31 years his junior. He died in 1908, a year before the project was finished. Rosa went on to finish the castle, but ended up broke, living in a shack and raising chickens.

Up Close and Personal

We would like to welcome John Hall who has been hired as an underground mine inspector in the Fairmont office. John will also be a member of the agency mine rescue team.



**HAPPY
HOLIDAYS!**



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Visit the agency's website at:*

www.wvminesafety.org

