



# MINER DETAILS



Volume 10 Issue 1 WV Office of Miners' Health, Safety & Training

February 2005

## BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP

### Agency Accomplishments

#### West Virginia Diesel Instructor Training

The first ever four-day training seminar to qualify instructors to teach 8-hour diesel operator and 16-hour diesel mechanic classes was conducted this month. The classes were held at the Mining Academy from January 31 through February 3 and resulted in approximately 20 persons becoming Qualified Diesel Instructors. The training was monitored by the WV Diesel Commission and included presenters from equipment manufacturers and vendors, state inspectors and trainers, MSHA's Tech Support, and others. The class included training on the new rubber-tired Model 255 personnel carrier provided by A. L. Lee Corporation. Those attending were provided instruction on WV diesel regulations, the diesel legislative history, and the diesel approval process. Detailed instruction of diesel particulate matter, engine fundamentals, and emission control technologies gave the participants a greater understanding concerning the health effects of diesel equipment. Each student was required to prepare materials and teach a particular part of the WV regulations to demonstrate teaching ability in front of the entire group and to emphasize learning the regulations. The class covered fuel handling and storage, inspection techniques, ventilation requirements, diagnostic emissions testing and record keeping. A new card classification called Qualified Diesel Instructor was created and provided to each person completing the course.

#### Newsletter 10-Year Anniversary

This first 2005 issue of *Miner Details* marks the 10<sup>th</sup> year of the publication. Seems like those years flew by! Remember, we always welcome your input and comments. Send suggestions for articles to Dave Kessler at: [dkessler@mines.state.wv.us](mailto:dkessler@mines.state.wv.us).

#### Permit of Approval Extensions

Over 2,200 permits issued by MHST are in the process of being extended for an additional year. This year, permit holders have new options available to assist them in that process. For the first time MHST is accepting on-line renewal applications and on-line payment of the renewal fees as well as penalty assessments. Thus far, several hundred applicants have opted to take advantage of the on-line procedure. In spite of a few rough edges, the new process is working well for the users. Look for additional on-line applications in the future.

#### *Inside this Newsletter:*

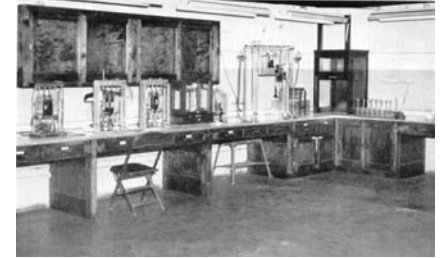
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#### Did You Know?

##### Lab work

In the 1940's and well into the late 1960's, the old Department of Mines' operated a fully equipped (for that period) laboratory. Technicians were employed to conduct analysis of coal and dust

samples. The labs were located in the basement of the Capitol Building in the east wing. Below is a photograph from the 1947 Annual Report showing one of the labs.



#### Mine Inspectors Examination

The mine inspectors' examination was scheduled for February 7, at the Mine Academy. There were 20 applicants for the underground portion. The hands on section of the test will be given March 8<sup>th</sup> in Oak Hill.

#### For Your Information

##### Dangers of Past Mining

November 5, 2004 a longwall mine with two continuous miner sections near Logan, WV began its normal operation. The No. 3 section was developing the new longwall headgate and was mining toward the No. 2 section to establish the ventilation bleeder. In the early afternoon, the No. 3 section cut into an old abandoned mine. According to the 1929 mine map, the old mine was projected to be 700' away. The continuous miner operator stated that everything appeared normal when all at once water started coming out of the face. He immediately shut off the miner and left the cutter head in the opening. Some feel this caused some restriction of the water and allowed more time for the escape of the miners. Water from rib-to-rib approximately 1' deep was moving with such force that no one

could walk in the water. The No. 3 section was 6,000' in length with a 300' rise in elevation. The mining height averaged 8'. The entire mine was evacuated. The water began pooling near the mouth of the section. Upon investigation it was determined that 40 to 60 million gallons of water had collected at 3 separate locations and had sealed the ventilation in this part of the mine. On the 3<sup>rd</sup>. day, the water significantly slowed down and the pumps began to gain on the water. An additional borehole was drilled into an active part of the mine to monitor the environment and it was learned that 6% of methane was in one of the water sealed areas and further complicated the recovery efforts. Directional drilling was used to determine the parameters of the old mine. Much of the old map was found to be incorrect. It took about 3 weeks to get onto the affected section, and 4 weeks before the mine returned to normal operations. No one was injured during the event. Future test drilling will begin at 1,000' in an attempt to provide a higher level of safety.

### Mine Map-making Capabilities

Among the new capabilities we now have within our agency is the ability to supply inspectors and supervisors with large-format printed maps of their active mines. Maps showing the extent of many mined-out areas for certain seams are also available. One particularly useful feature is our ability to provide USGS topographic maps for anywhere in West Virginia showing any desired mining features. For instance if you would like to see the mountain cover over a plot of your deep mine workings or would like to see how to get to a particular gas well or proposed borehole at the surface, this information can now be prepared and printed for you.

A comprehensive Mines and Facilities Atlas has been completed for the entire state, showing point locations of all active deep mines, surface mines, quarries, tipples/loadouts and slurry impoundments. This atlas is comprised of 25 pages sized at 22

x34 inches and shows topographic features, towns, creeks, roads, power lines, county lines, and other points of interest. The standard scale of this mapping is 1"=2 miles, although it can be printed at any scale. The regional offices each have a set.

If you would like to have your current haulroads or other surface structures approximately located on a map, this can now be done for you with our new GPS mapping capabilities. Haulroads can be approximately surveyed at normal driving speed. The GPS unit will store this information in a log that can be plotted directly to a map, along with any notes made along the way. Currently, the standard accuracy is limited to about 60 ft horizontal, although greater accuracy is available upon request. For more information, contact Monte Hieb in the Oak Hill office or mhieb@mines.state.wv.us.

### Email Filtering Update

Since November, our email has been "filtered" for "spam" and viruses by IS&C prior to delivery. Statistics provided by that agency are very interesting. For the months of November and December, approximately 100,000 emails were sent to our accounts. Of that total, 44,000 were deemed to be "spam" and were blocked from delivery. An additional 600 contained virus infections. Even with this additional protection, you still need to be very careful concerning email and attachments. Make sure your anti-virus is up-to-date.

### For Your Health Macular Degeneration

The leading cause of blindness for those aged 55 and older is Macular degeneration. The macula is a small patch of light sensitive cells in the Retina. When those cells deteriorate and die we lose central vision. Over 200,000 cases are diagnosed each year. The number of cases is expected to grow rapidly with the aging of the "baby boomer" generation. At the present time, there is no cure, nor is the cause known. Research efforts are looking at cause, prevention and

cure.

Cigarette smoking, sun exposure, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol may be factors increasing your risk for macular degeneration. On the other hand, foods containing antioxidants (specifically carotenoids, found in fruits and vegetables) are thought to be helpful for those with the disease and possibly as an aid in prevention. The normal macula has a high concentration of these antioxidants. Research is on going and recommendations are likely to change. The best advice is to get a yearly eye examination with a screening for MD.

There are a number of helpful websites dealing with this condition. Several of them include a simple vision test and simulations of the progression of the disease. Among the sites are eyesite.org and macular-degeneration.org.

### Up Close and Personal

We welcome **Andrew Sparks**, District Inspector, Danville who started in January. Also **Gary Wolfe**, Surface Inspector, Oak Hill, **Rob Mundy**, District Inspector, Fairmont and **Jay Deal** GIS Tech., Oak Hill. Additionally, **Hubert "Termite" Miller**, went from District Inspector in Danville to Electrical Inspector in Oak Hill. **Rod Wallace**, Surface Inspector has retired and **Brad Justice**, District Inspector has resigned. We wish both good luck!



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*Visit the agency's website at:*

[www.wvminesafety.org](http://www.wvminesafety.org)

