



# MINER DETAILS



Volume 11 Issue 4 WV Office of Miners' Health, Safety & Training July 2006

## BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP

### The Directors' Office

Jim Dean recently announced that he would stay with the agency through the month of August. Jim has been Acting Director since February 14, 2006 after Director Doug Conaway resigned. During Mr. Dean's six-month tenure, the entire agency has undergone a modernization with many technology improvements affecting all offices. He organized the WV Mine Technology Task Force which is piloting legislation in the wake of the Sago disaster and the Aracoma mine fire tragedy. He put a moratorium on the use of OMEGA Block type seals. His accomplishments include self-rescuer cache storage plans, emergency communications/tracking systems, lifelines in the intake escapeways and emergency shelters/ chambers. Mr. Dean's many on-going recommendations/changes will be appreciated throughout the agency for many years to come. Jim has made specific recommendations for continued improvements including additional staffing, salary increases and technological updates. Thank you Jim for accepting the helm at such a pivotal time in the course of the Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training.

### Agency Accomplishments Technology Task Force Update

The task force continues to make progress in coal mine safety. Improvements are recommended for mine rescue stations, mine rescue teams, and methods for locating trapped miners. Currently, work is progressing on systems that use seismic monitoring to "hear" trapped miners who may be signaling their positions from underground by pounding on the mine roof. The moratorium that prevents the construction of mine

seals using Omega Blocks remains in effect. Work is on-going to study methods to better train miners to use their self rescuers more reliably and more efficiently. Studies are on-going to measure the actual effectiveness of various self contained self rescuers. Emergency shelters / chambers are being reviewed / evaluated by our engineering staff to assure the units can be approved by our agency. Various surface to underground communication systems are being tested and evaluated. The task force will continue to meet monthly through August 2007 to assure these projects are seen to completion.

### Annual Report 2005

The Annual Report and Directory of Mines for 2005 has recently been published. This edition has most of the same types of data as previous reports plus some new data tables relating to Mapping and GIS and new data on our Website.

### Mine Inspector's Examination

Applications are currently being accepted for the positions of Underground Mine Inspector and Safety Instructor. Completed applications are due no later than August 18, 2006 in the Charleston Office. The examination is tentatively scheduled for September at the MSHA Mine Academy. Information and applications are available on our web site [www.wvminesafety.org](http://www.wvminesafety.org). If you have any questions please contact Tina Miller in the Charleston Office.

### Revised Underground Mine Foreman Study Guide

The Underground Mine Foreman Study Guide has recently been revised with a section on Diesel

Equipment. The new edition also includes the current underground certification forms. Other than these changes, the book is a reprint of the previous version.

### Inside this Newsletter:

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### Diesel Update

The Diesel commission met July 11 and approved 44 additional pieces of equipment. The equipment approved is as follows: Mingo Logan Coal Co., Mountaineer No. 2 mine – 20 initial pieces of diesel track equipment, Pocahontas Coal Co., LLC, Josephine No. 3 Mine -2 additional Wallace personnel carriers, Newtown Energy, Inc. Coalburg No. 1 Mine – 3 additional pieces of equipment, Big River Mining, LLC, Broad Run Mine – 6 initial pieces of equipment, Brody Mining, LLC, Brody Mine No. 1 - 8 initial pieces of equipment, Mettiki Coal LLC, E-Mine - 3 additional units, and Independence Coal, Justice Mine - 2 additional pieces of equipment. These additions bring the total to 145 units of diesel equipment approved for use in underground mines in West Virginia. New equipment is arriving at the mines almost daily.

### Upcoming Events

#### Diesel Commission Meeting

The next Diesel Commission meeting is scheduled for August 29 from 10 AM to 2PM at the Days

Inn Motel in Flatwoods. Applications for 21 pieces of diesel equipment are currently scheduled for review.

**Qualified Diesel Instructor Class**  
September 19<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> MSHA Mine Academy. December 18<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> location to TBA.

### **Board of Coal Mine Health and Safety**

The Board of Coal Mine Health and Safety is scheduled to meet August 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> in the Charleston office.

### **Board of Miner Training Education and Certification**

The next meeting of the Board of Miner Training Education and Certification is scheduled for August 22 in the Charleston office.

### **Mine Technology Task Force**

The Mine Technology Task Force is scheduled to meet August 21 in the Charleston office.

Note: all meeting dates and locations are subject to change.

### **Mine Rescue Contests**

WV State Contest – MSHA Mine Academy, July 18 -20.  
Post 5 - Morgantown, August 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.  
Southern WV - MSHA Mine Academy August 29 - 31.



**Mine Rescue Contest**

“Time is the coin of life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you.”—Carl Sandburg.

### **Did You Know?**

#### **Microsoft Updates**

A word of warning to any of you who may still have systems using Windows 98, you need to update to

a newer system. Windows 98 is no longer supported by Microsoft.

As of July 12, all Microsoft public and technical support for Windows 98, Windows 98SE and Windows ME ends. There will be no more security patches or updates. This leaves any 98 system vulnerable to a variety of risks.

### **Ransomware – the latest in Computer Threats**

As if we already didn't have enough to worry about with computer viruses, malicious adware and data theft, we now have a new worry – ransomware. Basically these threats are viruses that encrypt all the files in your “My Documents” folder or some other files on your system. When you try to open a document you get a message that asks for a password. To get the password you are then required to make specific purchases or pay a fee. In some cases the virus will delete files randomly until the fee is paid. The sources for most of these attacks are based in foreign countries. If you pay the fees then you need to worry about credit theft. Fortunately, there have been few such viruses, but their incidence rate is increasing. Your best protection is to keep your anti-virus up to date and to be cautious of your web surfing.

### **For Your Information**

#### **Electrical Apprentice Program**

A proposed rule change has been filed with the Secretary of State's office to change the standards for certification of coal mine electricians. Parts 4.1 and 8.1 of title 48 series 7 are proposed to be changed in a way that allows alternative apprentice electrical training programs to be approved which are less than 12 months in length.

#### **Mine Rescue Training Manual**

Wayne Ashby has been temporarily assigned the work of compiling a mine rescue training manual for the mining industry. He will be working in the Charleston Office to complete this work by the end of this year or early next year. We are sure that Wayne's vast experience

in mine rescue will be reflected in this upcoming publication. We will keep you posted about this project

### **Up Close and Personal**

We take this time to say good-bye and best wishes to **Charles Johnson, Rob Mundy, Kenny Dickens, and J. D. Higgenbotham.** Charles retired and Rob, Kenny, and J. D. resigned to return to the industry. Three persons have been hired as underground inspectors including **Ralph Tanner**-Fairmont Region, **Kevin Cline**- Welch Region, and **Michael Pauley**- Danville Region. **Dawn Marcus** has been temporarily hired as secretary in the Oak Hill Region. **Randall Harris**, independent engineer, has been contracted by the agency to assist the Mine Technology Task Force. Welcome Ralph, Kevin, Michael, Dawn and Randall. **Wayne Ashby** has returned to work from an extended illness. **Marjorie Terrell** is battling a very serious illness, please pray for her. Also keep in your thoughts **Art Shumate** who has had surgery.



### **Enjoy Summer Cookouts!**

*This newsletter is published bimonthly by the WV Office of MHS&T*

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Visit the agency's website at:*

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

