



# MINER DETAILS



Volume 5 Issue 2

WV Office of Miners' Health, Safety & Training

March 2000

## BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP

### From The Director's Office

The annual legislative session has been a tremendous struggle so far this year. Our most important bill, the budget bill, has been severely affected by shortfalls in revenue projections and by the continuing budgetary crisis with the PEIA. Accordingly, each agency has had to surrender 3% of its total annual budget and also has been assessed a 1% surcharge as a short-term solution to the continuing PEIA budgetary wars. Additionally, the finance committees have absolutely refused to even consider any improvement packages and are holding us liable for funding the third year of the Governor's mandatory \$756.00 increase. Had we not been successful in increasing our budget over the past two years, I have no doubt that we would have to eliminate positions before the start of the new fiscal year. Legislators have posed some extremely tough questions this session especially while we try to defend the fact that we average 4.5 active mines per underground inspector. Even so, I remain hopeful that we will be able to achieve current level funding without having to eliminate any positions.

On a brighter note, our agency-endorsed legislative agenda has gone well. Both of our bills have passed the Senate and are well on their way to passing the House. One of the bills updates the definition of emergency medical service personnel, and the other bill authorizes the Director to offer training in lieu of monetary penalties for individual personal assessments. Passage of both bills is likely.

In the final analysis, our prospects for success are not nearly as encouraging as they have been in the past couple of years. Be assured that we have been working as hard as possible to ensure that we make it through this legislative session without losing any positions. Fortunately, the Governor and his legislative staff have been right there supporting our effort. Because of that, I remain hopeful that we will be successful.

Ron Harris, Director

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### Agency Accomplishments

#### Certification Examinations

During the next several months, many changes will be made in the certification examination process. As part of our current states grant program, we have contracted with WVU Mining Extension Office to develop automated examinations for our written certifications. This is going to require a PC network in each regional office to give and evaluate the exams.

We will be installing over 50 PCs statewide. In order to keep costs at a minimum, we will utilize used and reconditioned PC's from state surplus property. We are also utilizing the talents of many agency employees to make this new system possible. More

informational updates will be issued as this program progresses.

#### Metal, Non-Metal Training

MHS&T will soon be offering Code of Federal Regulations Part 46, 8 hour annual retraining to metal, non-metal miners. These classes are being offered free of charge on a limited, first-come first-served basis to approximately 250 miners. The classes will be available from April 1, 2000 through September 30, 2000. This training is being made available through the states grants program. For additional information, contact your regional office.

#### Mountaineer Guardian Awards

A total of fifty-seven nominations from all around WV were entered to receive the 1999 Mountaineer Guardian Award. Nominees were chosen for the low accident incident rate at each respective facility. These facilities included underground and surface coal mines, coal processing plants, load-outs, and river docks as well as quarry operations. Only a certain number of awards were presented, but those nominees not chosen to receive the award were presented with honorable mention certificates. The recipient of the highest award of the program, the Barton B. Lay Award of Excellence presented for the lowest incident rate, was Kingston Mining Incorporated. The Glen Alum Mine is located near Kingston in Fayette County.

#### Bulletin! Fatal 2-2000

An electrical contractor drowned when he fell through a metal screen into the raw coal sump at a preparation plant. He had been

standing on a screened area above the tank to install electrical conduit.

## For Your Information

### Gas Prices

As you are well aware, gas prices have continued to soar to new record highs. For those who are assigned a state vehicle, it is very important to use common sense when purchasing gasoline. Monthly gas costs have nearly doubled for this agency in the last several months. Try to car-pool whenever practical; such as when attending meetings or training classes.

### On Line Shopping Hints

Here are a few tips that may help you during your on-line shopping. Patronize only secure Web sites, for example, those, which encrypt personal information such as credit card numbers.

Make sure the site provides an address and phone number that can be used later if there is a problem (wrong merchandise, no delivery, etc.).

Read the site's warranty, privacy, refund and cancellation policies. (Cancellations or returns may be costly; there could be a restocking charge.)

Using a credit card gives you protection against unauthorized charges (maximum liability \$50.00) and gives some billing error rights.

If using a comparison site, remember not all are objective.

You can verify a company's reputation at [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org) (Better Business Bureau), or report a problem and get shopping tips at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) (Federal Trade Commission). You can contact the company's home state consumer protection watchdog at [www.naag.org](http://www.naag.org) or learn about on-going net scams at [www.fraud.org](http://www.fraud.org). Check [www.consumerworld.org](http://www.consumerworld.org) for product reviews and scam alerts. This site also has various product discounts, articles on financing, investing, credit card rate comparisons, and seemingly

endless links to similar or related on-line buying.

### Roofbolts

Resin is used in conjunction with roof bolts that have an expansion shell to enhance the anchor zone of the roof bolt. Most expansion shells make contact with approximately 3 to 4 inches of the wall of the drilled hole. Normally, the equivalent of 1-foot of resin is used to increase the contacted surface at the anchor point of the roof bolt. This increases the capacity of the anchor and helps to maintain proper torque in soft shale conditions. A dry hole (a bolt without resin) should be installed at the beginning of the shift to determine if the bolts are being installed at the proper torque. If any resin-assisted bolt is torqued after installation, no more than approximately 150 ft.lbs. should be applied to the bolt head. If more torque is applied, the resin will break from around the bolt damaging the anchor.

### Did You Know?

The United States Bureau of Public Debt has a Web site to help you figure the worth of any US Savings bonds that you may have. Called [www.publicdebt.treas.gov](http://www.publicdebt.treas.gov), the site allows you to enter the series (such as EE), the face value, and the month and year a savings bond was issued. The site then automatically shows you the current value, the interest rate, final maturity date, and when the next earnings are available. The site provides a convenient list so you can compare which bonds are performing best. You might be surprised to learn, for example, that the interest rate varies from 4% in the late 1980's to 6% in the early 90's then back around 4% from March 93 through April 1995. Since many people buy bonds over a period of several years and then use them interest-free to pay for college tuition, this site is a great tool for managing those tax-free earnings. The forms necessary for record keeping and for calculating the tax-exempt earnings are also available from the site.

## Up Close and Personal

John Meadows of the Buchannon office spends his leisure time turkey and buck hunting, coaching baseball, and announcing little league football games, play-by-play. John is a Dallas Cowboy and WV Mountaineer football fan. William H. Wolford of the Danville office spends his leisure time bow and black powder hunting, and fishing for trout and crappie with his wife and granddaughter. Bill says both are excellent fishermen and pretty good bow hunters. If you want to catch the biggest fish of the day, don't take either along! Albert Lechiara of the Fairmont office spends his leisure time deer and elk hunting, and fishing for trout and bass with his children and grandchildren. Al enjoys baseball, boating, camping, and hiking. Tyrone Coleman of the Welch office spends his leisure time deer and squirrel hunting and fishing for bass. Ty enjoys baseball, soccer, riding motorcycles and traveling with his children. He also likes to fly ultra-lite aircraft. Clark Gillian of the Oak Hill office spends his leisure time grouse hunting, doing yard work, gardening, and tending his home orchard. Clark enjoys bee keeping, and fly fishing the New River in the late summer and fall with hand-tied flies.

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*Visit the agency's website at:*

*[www.state.wv.us/mhst](http://www.state.wv.us/mhst)*

