



# MINER DETAILS



Volume 11 Issue 2 WV Office of Miners' Health, Safety & Training March 2006

## BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP

### From the Directors' Office

Since his appointment as Acting Director, James Dean has been extremely busy with the on-going accident investigations and the current legislative session. The transition is continuing and Jim hopes to have an opportunity to meet with all employees in the near future.

### Agency Accomplishments

#### New Mine Safety Rules for West Virginia

In January, the state legislature approved WV Senate Bill 247 concerning new safety rules for West Virginia's coal industry. New mining rules included in Bill 247 present a great opportunity for improving coal mine safety, and pose some challenges for the industry as well. A "round table" discussion of the new safety rules was held in February at the Charleston Civic Center to prepare for a more detailed conference held March 1, also at the Civic Center. More than 400 attended the March conference. Experts from the state and federal governments, mine safety community and academia examined what these new rules mean, how they may be implemented and the technologies needed to make West Virginia's mining community the safest in the world.

WV Senate Bill 247 affects parts 22A-2-55 and 66, repeals 22A-2-69, and creates a new section of WV law, Title 56 Series 4. The newly enacted law creates changes in Chapter 5 (Public Safety) and Chapter 24 (Public Service Commission) to set up a mine and industrial accident rapid response system. Additionally, a task force is set into motion to study new technology needed to comply with WV's new mine safety rules.

### Inside this Newsletter:

- *From the Director's Office*
- *Agency Accomplishments*
- *Diesel Update*
- *Did You Know?*
- *For Your Information*
- *Up Close and Personal*

### Diesel Update

Some diesel equipment manufacturers are turning toward older wet scrubber technology on modern machines heading for West Virginia mines. These include rockdusting machines and personnel carriers. The wet scrubber is being reintroduced because it is effective for cooling the submersed hot exhaust gas stream. The wet scrubber consumes water and presents several problems if the water level becomes too low or if the water is contaminated with antifreeze. For diesel equipment equipped with wet scrubbers, a low water switch that stops the engine must be provided and a flame arrestor must be installed within 18 inches of the end of the tailpipe. These safety features must be in place in addition to the high exhaust temperature shutdown feature provided on all other diesel equipment. Antifreeze cannot be allowed in the scrubber water because it releases a harmful gas into the mine atmosphere as the antifreeze turns into steam. The flame arrestor must be provided because the diesel particulate collected on the paper or synthetic filter can catch on fire if the water level gets too low. The flame arrestor must be installed near the end of the tailpipe to prevent

flammable, tar-like accumulations inside the exhaust pipe.

### Did You Know?

#### New Amended Emergency Rule in Effect

Be aware that a new emergency rule Title 56 Series 4 is currently in effect. This amended rule provides for the following: The establishment of a Mine Safety Technology Task Force to provide technical assistance with the commercial availability and operational capability of rescue chambers, wireless communication and wireless tracking devices. The employee representatives are: Theodore B. Hapney, Gary Trout and Stephen Webber. The coal operators' representatives are Dale Birchfield, Terry Hudson and Todd Moore.

This rule determines the placement intervals of additional SCSRs to be used to exit the mine. Rescue chambers are permitted that will provide 24 hours of breathable air. Also mining companies are required to submit a plan and compliance schedule for each of the requirements in the rule.

#### Mine and Industrial Accident Rapid Response System

Senate Bill No. 247 as passed and enrolled by the Legislature, requires the Director of the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management to establish and operate the Mine and Industrial Accident Rapid Response System. This system is to be designed to receive emergency calls from mining and industrial accident sites and to coordinate the effective and efficient response to the same. The Homeland Security Director is further charged to devise operating procedures for the requisite call center; organize and equip the call center, obtain and

publish to various interested parties a state-wide reporting telephone number; and co-ordinate all operations with the Office of Miners' Health Safety and Training.

The emergency telephone number to report mining (or industrial) accidents is **1-866-987-2338**. The call center will then notify the mining agency director if the accident involves mining.

### **MSHA Publishes Emergency Temporary Standard on Mine Evacuation**

For only the third time in the history of the Mine Act, MSHA on March 7, issued an emergency temporary standard to improve protection of miners during and after underground coal mine accidents and evacuations. The standard will become effective immediately upon publication in the Federal Register March 9, 2006.

### **For Your Information Old Hard Drives**

When you dispose of your old PC, do you consider what may happen to your old hard drive? Many old hard drives show up on EBAY and other on-line auction sites. These have become very popular. Some buyers are looking specifically for these old drives because only fractions have been wiped clean. A recent study of 236 drives purchased on EBAY for the study showed seven contained more than 300 recoverable credit card numbers and one had more than 11,000 unique account numbers. The drive with the 11,000 numbers came from a medical center. Other drive came from an ATM, a supermarket, and an auto dealership. So what should you do when you dispose of your old PC? Even formatting the hard drive will not completely erase such data. There are software tools available to recover data from formatted hard drives. As a PC owner, you need to be very careful of the data that you store on your computer. Don't use the auto-fill options when paying bills or placing orders. Many experts contend that the only way to safely dispose of a hard drive

with sensitive information on it is to physically destroy the drive.

### **Personal Retriever Flotation Device**

This device from Life-Safer, Inc. ([www.life-safer.com](http://www.life-safer.com)) has recently been approved by the U.S. Coast Guard as a Type V Personal Flotation Device. In line with the American Red Cross's "throw, don't go" advice, the Personal Retriever is an aerodynamic disc made of expanded polyethylene foam. It can easily support a distressed person in the water. The device can be thrown by hand out to 100 feet in 10 seconds or less, even in strong winds. In less than 45 seconds the Personal Retriever can be retrieved and redeployed using its integrated, 650-pound-test-polypropylene line.



Innovative person-flotation device allows for quicker response and greater reach for water rescues.

### **Open Enrollment Period**

Please be reminded that open enrollment for health insurance will be April 10 through May 12, 2006. Keep these dates in mind if you plan to make changes to your health insurance coverage.

### **Credit Report**

As of September 1, 2005 all US citizens are entitled to a free yearly copy of their credit report from each of the three major credit bureaus. You may have received offers for "free" credit reports or seen advertising for them. Be very careful of these offers. Most will tack on charges and some may try to steal your personal information. So if you want your free credit report, what should you do? According to the Federal Trade Commission, there is only one authorized online source for you to get a free credit report under federal law. That site is, [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com). You can also get your free credit report via phone by calling: 877-322-

8228. Keep in mind that you can only have one "free" report per year.

### **WV Trivia**

Did you know?

- The mother of Abraham Lincoln, Nancy Hanks, was born near Romney, WV
- With an average altitude of 1,500 feet, WV is the highest state east of the Mississippi.
- The first concrete street in the world was laid in the town of Webster Springs, WV in 1903.
- West Virginia has the oddest shape of any state. That is because of the way the state was created during the Civil War.
- The hardwood flooring in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in NY was manufactured by the Meadow River Lumber Co. in Rainelle, WV.

### **Up Close and Personal**

We would like to express a warm welcome to several new MHST employees. **James M. Dean**, is the new Acting Director of the agency. **Curtis Vance III** is a new surface inspector in the Danville region. **George R. Leake** is a new electrical inspector in Danville. **John Cruse** has been hired as a Technical Analyst working in the Oak Hill office. **James G. Norman** and **Paul D. Smith** are new underground inspectors in the Welch region. **John T. O'Brien** is a newly hired safety instructor in Welch.



### **Spring Renewal!**

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

*Governor Joe Manchin III*

*James Dean, Acting Director*

*Contact Person: Dave Kessler*

*Visit the agency's website at:*

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

