



# South Central District

## Field Notes

2009 Spring Edition



**F**rom the desk of the South Central District Manager

Valued Employees and Stakeholders:

Welcome to spring and all that it brings. Soon the trees will be full of blossoms, bees will be busier than ever and we will once again spend more time outdoors after surviving yet another winter. I have always enjoyed springtime as new life becomes evident everywhere. Additionally, it opens up the season for Spring Thaw Workshops, state and regional conferences and of course our South Central Joint Mine Health & Safety Conference. This year's joint conference will be in St. Louis and I look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible. Our state conferences have shown great success thus far and have been very well attended. In this issue of 'Field Notes' you will find information on these conferences past, present and future.



E.I.

The conference season kicked off in this district at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Missouri Safety and Health Conference. The organizers of this conference once again proved that if you build it right – they will come. It was a very well attended conference and featured excellent speakers. Certainly, not to be outdone, our partners in Arkansas held their conference in February and it was so well attended it became a 'standing room only' event. Once again an all star line up of speakers kept the audience's attention throughout.

As previously mentioned, our all district conference will be one you won't want to miss as it will feature some of the best speakers as well as work shops, discussion groups and networking opportunities for all. It is right around the corner, so please make your preparations so it won't pass you by.

Last, but not least, I hope you will attend the second New Mexico Mine Health and Safety Conference in May. This conference got off to a wonderful start last year and by all indications will continue on in that tradition. This year's theme will be 'Step up and do the right thing!' So, step up and attend this conference. I'm sure you'll be glad you did.

I hope everyone will enjoy this new season and carry that enjoyment into the summer months. Don't forget safety pays, as do Sun Glasses, Sun Screen and a Good Hat. Lastly, please remember to be cognizant of children returning to the street to play. Be sure to give them a Brake!

E.I.

Leave No Mine(R) Behind...

The road to 'Zero' must be paved with optimism!

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# Upcoming Events



**South Central Joint Mine Health & Safety Conference  
St. Louis, MO  
March 16 - 19, 2009**

Make your plans now to attend the 27th Annual South Central Joint Mine Safety & Health Conference on March 16 - 19, 2009.

<u>Presentation Topics</u>	<u>Discussion Groups</u>	<u>Location</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contractor versus Operator Responsibilities</li> <li>• Supervisor Responsibilities</li> <li>• Sleep Deprivation</li> <li>• Safety and Leadership</li> <li>• Safety and the bottom Line</li> <li>• MSHA/Industry Panel Discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contractors</li> <li>• Mill</li> <li>• Open Pit</li> <li>• Sand and Gravel</li> <li>• Stone</li> <li>• Underground</li> </ul>	Renaissance Grand Hotel and Suites 800 Washington Avenue St. Louis, MO 63101 Phone: 800-397-1282, or; 314-621-9600 Fax: 314-621-9601

For more information, please see the link listed: <http://www.utexas.edu/cee/txmshp/msha/conference/index.html>

## New Mexico Mine Health and Safety Step Up and Do the Right Thing!

**May 4, 5, and 6, 2009**

**Macey Center**

**New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology  
Socorro, NM**

Our conference theme, **Step Up and Do the Right Thing**, recognizes that we have decisions to make in our workplace every day. These decisions affect all our Partners in Safety, and doing the right thing is the only way to get to the common goal: an incident free workplace. The conference provides all groups involved in New Mexico mining with the chance to share ideas, experiences, and lessons learned on what it takes to

**"Step Up and Do the Right Thing!"**



**New Mexico Mine  
Health and Safety  
2nd Annual Conference**

**For more information  
on this event and others:  
See Upcoming Events at  
[WWW.MSHA.GOV](http://WWW.MSHA.GOV)**



## NEWS FROM AROUND THE DISTRICT



The 3rd Annual Missouri Mine Safety and Health Conference was held on January 15th and 16th, 2009 at the Tan-Tar-A Resort in Osage Beach, MO. Over 250 attendees were at this event. The two days were packed with informative sessions, including a question and answer panel with MSHA and Industrial personnel on it. This year's conference was a great success.



Attendees at the MO conference listen attentively to the presentations given as part of the conference.



Jason Bish from Fred Weber Inc and Bob Roscoe of Doe Run Company, members of the MO Safety & Health conference committee, are seen here with Eddie Lopez.

### Arkansas Safety & Health Conference at Hot Springs, AR

This year's Arkansas Safety and Health Conference was held in Hot Springs, AR on February 5th and 6th, 2009. Presenters from MSHA, Arkansas DOL, vendors and others gave informative presentations before the conference attendees. Plans for the 2010 Arkansas Safety and Health conference are already in the works. We look forward to seeing you there.



Arkansas Mine operators listen eagerly to conference presenters and the information that they are giving.



Michael VanDorn, MSHA Little Rock Field Office Supervisor and Todd Thornton, HR Manager for ACME Brick make a presentation before the audience.



Eddie Lopez presents Susan Weaver (Labor Safety consultant for the Arkansas DOL) a token of appreciation for her work as the coordinator of the conference.



## DISTRICT NEWS

# Spring Thaws

Late winter and early spring generally result in an increase of activity at surface mines, plants, and at the surface areas of underground mines. Seasonal changes impact many aspects of mining activity and often result in an increase in haulage, machinery, maintenance, and other surface mining related accidents.

Spring Thaw seminars have been scheduled for:

March 26, 2009 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in McAllen, TX, and:

March 31, 2009 at Capital Aggregates in San Antonio, TX.

For more information, please contact your MSHA Field Office in those areas.

If your company is interested in hosting or sponsoring one of these seminars in your area, please contact your local MSHA field office for more information.



The Texas State Holmes Safety Association Annual meeting was held in Corpus Christi, TX on January 23rd and 24th, 2009. This meeting is usually held in September of each year to correspond with the Texas "Mine Safety Day" as proclaimed on September 8th each year by the Governor of Texas. These meetings are an opportunity for members to advance the association's objectives in the area of preventing fatalities and injuries; and to improve health and safety among employees in all phases of the mining industries.



Ralph Rodriguez, MSHA San Antonio Field Office Supervisor (left) and AC Rodriguez of Sherwin Alumina (right) were just two of the many presenters at this gathering.



More information on Holmes Association activity in Texas can be found at:  
<http://www.utexas.edu/cee/txmshp/holmes/index.html>

Information on the Joseph A. Holmes Association in general can be found at:  
<http://www.holmessafety.org/index.html>



## DISTRICT IH NEWS

### Prevention is the Only Cure

by Camille Holcomb, MPH



When I graduated in 2008 with a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree, my critical path became clear—MSHA was hiring, and the focus of my master's degree, occupational health and industrial hygiene, was a great match for the opening in Dallas. I was hired!

I began to familiarize myself with the MSHA culture and the personalities of my colleagues, and that's when I noticed something—email mottos—many of my co-workers had incorporated a personal belief or attitude, regarding how they felt about mine health and safety, at the end of their emails. After pondering the incurable diseases and chronic conditions miners encounter, my email motto became, "Prevention...because most mining-related diseases have no cure." Of those that came to mind, respiratory disorders topped the list: pulmonary fibrosis, silicosis, asbestosis, and mesothelioma. In this article, I will discuss these diseases and conditions hoping to illustrate the importance of preventing harmful exposures because currently they have no cure.

Let me begin with *pneumoconiosis*—a term used to describe a group of occupational lung diseases caused by long-term inhalation of dusts, which collect in—and cannot be removed from—the lungs. These dusts are inhaled during both the mining and processing of silica and asbestos. Thus, *silicosis* and *asbestosis* are lung diseases categorized under the broader term, *pneumoconiosis*, and each one greatly reduces a miner's quality of life.<sup>1</sup>

*Pulmonary fibrosis* is scarring of the lung tissue caused, in this case, by the accumulation of dust contaminants in the lung's air sacs. Once the air sacs become *fibrotic* and inflexible, oxygen can no longer transfer into the bloodstream, causing shortness of breath, hacking, coughing, fatigue, chest pain, and blueness around the lips and ears.<sup>1</sup>

*Silicosis* is more commonly known as "*grinder's disease*" or "*miner's phthisis*" (wasting away of the lungs). Miners that work around stone, sand, or clay are at the highest risk for developing silicosis. When a miner is unprotected from silica dusts, hard masses and scarring (pulmonary fibrosis) form in the lung's air sacs, hindering the transfer of oxygen to the blood.<sup>1</sup>

*Asbestos* is another naturally occurring mineral, which if inhaled, can obstruct lung tissue and cause *asbestosis* (again, scarring of the air sacs) in addition to scarring of the tissue *around* the lungs. It wasn't until the mid-twentieth century that asbestos was directly linked to lung cancers like *mesothelioma* (named for the protective lining that covers most of the body's internal organs, the *mesothelium*). When diagnosed, *mesothelioma* is first detected in the outer lining of the lungs and chest wall, and can then easily spread to the abdomen and heart sac.<sup>1</sup>

#### Treatment

Currently, silicosis and asbestosis are treated with medications, such as steroid hormones, that reduce lung inflammation, but these can only moderately suppress a miner's symptoms. What's worse, is these medications have serious side effects such as diabetes, glaucoma, skin cancer, and lymphoma. For these reasons, such medications can only be used for short periods of time.<sup>3</sup>

For mesothelioma, conventional cancer treatments such as radiation, chemotherapy, and surgery are used, but to date, there is no cure. The American Cancer Society maintains that even the family members of asbestos miners have been diagnosed with mesothelioma due to second-hand exposure from asbestos-covered clothing worn home from the worksite.<sup>2</sup>

As of today, the only "cure" for silicosis, asbestosis, and the resulting pulmonary fibrosis and mesothelioma, is complete lung transplantation. When miners are first exposed to these dusts, there are no crippling or debilitating symptoms. Sadly, however, when symptoms finally emerge, little can be done but make the miner comfortable. Therefore our efforts must be aimed at *preventing* prolonged exposures rather than merely treating the resulting diseases.

Chest x-ray of clear, healthy lungs



Chest x-ray of lungs with pulmonary fibrosis (note the white, opaque areas around the heart)



<sup>1</sup> Tracey, D. J. (2000). *Anatomica: the complete reference to the human body and how it works*. Random House Pty Ltd.

<sup>2</sup> American Cancer Society. (n.d.). *Asbestos*. Retrieved February 22, 2009, from [http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED\\_1\\_3X\\_Asbestos.asp?sitearea=PED](http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED_1_3X_Asbestos.asp?sitearea=PED)

<sup>3</sup> Diseases and conditions. (n.d.). *Pulmonary fibrosis*. Retrieved February 22, 2009, from <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/pulmonary-fibrosis/DS00927>



## HEALTH NEWS

The fiscal year 2009 is seeing some new health sampling techniques being utilized by our inspectorate. After a review and phone calls to a number of our stakeholders the SCD has identified known contaminates at each of our individual mines. The purpose for this collection of data is to provide proper guidance to our inspectorate and to utilize our time and resources more efficiently.



Gary Cook  
SCD Health  
Specialist

The new achievements in technology have dictated that MSHA identify the contaminates, whether they be noise, dust, or chemicals, and collect samples for analysis to provide a healthy environment for our miners. Although our stakeholders are well aware of the hazards of their mining and milling techniques, MSHA's role is to provide another set of eyes to ensure that our miners are not being exposed to conditions that may have a short or long term affect on their health. As we all know, some symptoms do not show up for several months or even years after the miner has left the industry.

Our goal is to identify these hazards and reduce or eliminate their effects on our people. New technology has affected us in a twofold arena. Technology has allowed us to burn hazardous waste, made mining for certain elements more economically feasible and increased the tonnage that is recovered through our mining procedures. It has also provided us with the capabilities to engineer controls that reduce the exposure to harmful contaminates. Working with our tech support group and the mining companies, we will provide a healthier work place for our miners.

## MINE RESCUE NEWS

### 2009 REGIONAL MINE RESCUE CONTEST DATES

- **Southern Regional Mine Rescue Contest**
  - Dates: April 28-30, 2009
  - Location: New Iberia, Louisiana
  - Contact: [hcharpentier@mortonsalt.com](mailto:hcharpentier@mortonsalt.com)
- **Central Idaho Mine Rescue Contest**
  - Dates: May 15-16, 2009
  - Location: Kellogg, Idaho
  - Contact: [cmrescue@cebridge.net](mailto:cmrescue@cebridge.net)
- **Nevada Mine Rescue Contest**
  - Dates: June 4-6, 2009
  - Location: UNR Fire Science Academy, Carlin, NV
  - Contact: Randy Squires ([rsquires@unr.edu](mailto:rsquires@unr.edu))
  - Website: (information to be updated):  
<http://fireacademy.unr.edu/>
- **Northern Mine Rescue Contest**
  - Dates: August 12 – 14, 2009
  - Location: Rochester, NY
  - Contact: [Barry\\_Carlson@cargill.com](mailto:Barry_Carlson@cargill.com)
- **Kansas Shootout Mine Rescue Contest**
  - Dates: May 12 – 14, 2009
  - Location: Hutchinson, KS
  - Contact: [dobrinski@hutchcc.edu](mailto:dobrinski@hutchcc.edu)
- **Southwestern Regional Mine Rescue Contest**
  - Dates: May 19-21, 2009
  - Location: Ruidoso, New Mexico
  - Contact: [Buddy.Webb@wipp.ws](mailto:Buddy.Webb@wipp.ws)
- **Colorado State MNM Mine Rescue Contest**
  - Dates: July 21-23, 2009
  - Location: Idaho Springs, CO
  - Contact: [Harry.Lovely@state.co.us](mailto:Harry.Lovely@state.co.us)
- **Missouri Regional Mine Rescue Contest**
  - Dates: September 22-24, 2009
  - Location: Rolla, MO
  - Contact: [jtaylor@mst.edu](mailto:jtaylor@mst.edu)



## DISTRICT SAFETY NOTES

### **South Central Districts TOP 10 Violations for 2008**

In 2008 , 529 standards were cited by SCD personnel. This list contains the top ten (10) standards cited. These account for close to 45% of the violations issued in 2008. As you read this list and review your mine site, think about how many of these (and the corresponding assessment dollars) could have been avoided by proper inspections by your mine personnel. The standards are:

- 1) 56/57.14107(a): Moving machine parts shall be guarded to protect person from contacting moving parts that can cause injury.
- 2) 56/57.14132(a): Manually-operated horns or other audible warning devices provided on self-propelled equipment as a safety device shall be maintained in functional condition.
- 3) 56/57.12004: Electrical conductors shall be of a sufficient size and current-carrying capacity to ensure a rise in temperature resulting from normal operations will not damage the insulating materials. Electrical conductors exposed to mechanical damage shall be protected.
- 4) 56/57.12032: Inspection and cover plates on electrical equipment and junction boxes shall be kept in place at all times except during testing or repairs.
- 5) 56/57.20003(a): At all mining operations workplaces, passageways, storerooms, and service rooms shall be kept clean and orderly.
- 6) 56/57.14100(b): Defects on any equipment, machinery, and tools that affect safety shall be corrected in a timely manner.
- 7) 56/57.14112(b): Guards shall be securely in place while machinery is being operated, except when testing or making adjustments which cannot be performed without removal of the guard.
- 8) 56/57.12008: Power wires and cables shall be insulated adequately where they pass into or out of electrical compartments.
- 9) 50.30(a): Each operator of a mine in which an individual worked during any day of a calendar quarter shall submit and retain a MSHA Form 7000-2.
- 10) 56/57.14101(a)(2): If equipped on self-propelled mobile equipment, parking brakes shall be capable of holding the equipment with its typical load on the maximum grade it travels.





## DISTRICT SAFETY NOTES

### POP Quiz!

Remember those days when you were in school, you would walk into your class room and your teacher's face would have that secret grin on it that all teachers share. As you sat down, papers would be passed out and the teacher would say..."I want to review our work from earlier with some questions."

Here are some general questions that you might give your personnel at your next safety meeting:

- 1) For a citation to be S&S which of the following is not considered:
  - a) Who is or was/will be exposed to the hazard can be explained;
  - b) Where the condition is located;
  - c) What job related task would expose the miner to the hazard can be explained;
  - d) When exposed to the hazard it is reasonably likely to result in substantial injury.
  
- 2) Which is **false** - Task training must be provided if:
  - a) A miner is reassigned to a task that they have no previous work experience in;
  - b) A change occurs in the task's safety procedure;
  - c) The miner is absent for more than seven days;
  - d) A new hazardous chemical becomes part of the task.
  
- 3) In First Aid, ABC stands for:
  - a) Always Be Careful;
  - b) Airway, Bleeding, Circulation;
  - c) Assistance Being Called;
  - d) Airway, Breathing, Circulation.
  
- 4) The MSHA 7000-1 form is used to report:
  - a) Man hours;
  - b) Accidents;
  - c) Close calls;
  - d) None of the above.
  
- 5) MSDS stands for:
  - a) Miners Security Developed Safely;
  - b) Material Storage Developed Safely;
  - c) Material Safety Data Sheets;
  - d) Material Security Data Storage.
  
- 6) If a full hopper stops feeding material to the belt below, what hazardous condition probably occurred?
  - a) Feeder stopped;
  - b) Belt Stopped;
  - c) Slope failure;
  - d) Feed bridged over.





## DISTRICT SAFETY NOTES

### POP Quiz!

- 7) What steps should a worker take to correct the problem in the previous question?
- a) Scream at it so it knows it better not act up again;
  - b) Follow all steps of the lock out / tag out procedures specified for the equipment;
  - c) Enter the hopper and jump up and down until the material flows freely;
  - d) Bar down the material from a position outside the hopper.
  - e) B and C.
  - f) B and D.
- 8) Which of the following is **false** when it comes to fire extinguishers?
- a) They should be checked for operating condition on a daily basis;
  - b) They should be locked in place to prevent stealing or misuse;
  - c) They should be strategically located, readily accessible, plainly marked, and maintained in fire-ready condition;
  - d) They should be inspected visually at least once a month to determine that they are fully charged & operable.
- 9) In regards to circuit breaker boxes, which statement is **false**?
- a) All breakers should be labeled;
  - b) Should be enclosed to minimize moisture & dust inside;
  - c) Knockouts should be left open to allow for ventilation;
  - d) Wires entering should be bushed with insulated bushings.
- 10) Air purifying respirators are recommended for which of the following type of atmospheres?
- a) Oxygen deficient;
  - b) Dusty;
  - c) Carbon Dioxide rich;
  - d) Oxygen rich.



ANSWERS:  
1-b; 2-c; 3-d; 4-b; 5-c; 6-d; 7-f; 8-b; 9-c; 10-b.



# Spotlight on the *Little Rock, AR* **Field Office**



## Little Rock Field Office



Welcome to the South Central Districts Little Rock, Arkansas Field Office. This is the second of an ongoing series that will highlight and look at the personnel that make up each of the nine field offices representing MSHA for the South Central District.

Back Row: Chester Brown, Mark Shearer, Dwight Shields, Carl Jones and Steve Medlin

Front Row: Allen Livingston, Michael VanDorn, and Michael Dyer.

Not pictured: James Shaffer

Bringing to the South Central District over 130 years of both underground and surface mining and 36 years as inspectors, this group is ready to assist miners and mine operators towards achieving the goal of ZERO (zero fatalities and zero accidents).

Great Job!

## NEW HIRES IN THE SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT



Dale Coleman  
Rolla-South



Mitchell  
Dunaway  
Rolla-South



Richard  
McGrath  
Albuquerque



Tommy  
Fitzgerald  
Dallas



Michael Dyer  
Little Rock



Brandon  
Olivier  
San Antonio



Homer Pricer  
San Antonio



Jason Hoermann  
San Antonio



James  
Meadows  
Norman



Ramiro  
Jimenez, Jr.  
Carlsbad



## District Contact Information

MSHA  
1100 Commerce Street  
Room 462  
Dallas, TX 75242  
Phone: 214-767-8401  
Fax: 214-767-8405

Leave No Mine(r) Behind.



To submit information and photos for possible inclusion in Field Notes, please contact Mac Burriss in the district office at 214-767-8401 or at [burriss.elwood@dol.gov](mailto:burriss.elwood@dol.gov).

### Safety Meetings - Seven Step Program for Improvement

On the TV, radio, internet and in printed material we all see ads for various 1-step, 7-step, 10-step programs to help us lose weight, gain popularity, break a bad habit and so forth. Some are very helpful in pushing us towards improvement.

Here is a 7-step program to help you improve those short safety meetings and help to develop a better safety culture in your mine.

1. Know what your objective is and plan your meeting around it: A safety meeting is not a one-way communication about safety. It is a planned communication event aimed at achieving a specific objective. The planning involves both the content – the “what” of the meeting – and the process – the “how”.
2. Determine what content is of interest and value to your employees: Topics should be relevant to the type of facility or mine they are working at, the work that they do, the conditions they work in and the risks and hazards they may be exposed to. If you are short on subject material, ask them what is on their minds.
3. Limit your material: No more than three to five points should be presented during a short meeting – more can be used if the meeting is longer. The object is not to cover as much as you possibly can; the object is for your people to learn and focus on a few critical elements of safe work.
4. Involve your people in the meetings: Ask questions, and let them answer. If people are talking, they are active and engaged. A one-way communication, the most common format by far, is of limited value. What will get your people talking? Is there a way to get other people to lead part of the meeting or perhaps talk about a safety issue of particular importance to them?
5. Don't use the same format each time: Try a round table discussion group; or break them down into smaller groups and let them brainstorm a safety problem or recommendation. Use different people and job classifications to change the leadership for the meetings. Have outside experts come in to talk about their equipment and safety experience.
6. “Near miss” situations – use them, discuss them, and come up with ideas to prevent their reoccurrence: If possible, get your people to talk about incidents that they may have been part of or seen, but make sure not to single anyone particular out for embarrassment or punishment. Open discussion and constructive learning from this type of conversation will help improve the effectiveness of these meetings and make them more useful to your people.
7. Follow up on suggestions and issues identified in the meeting, not only with the item, but also with the people. A common complaint of ineffective safety meetings is “we bring stuff up but nothing gets done about it.” Don't spend every safety meeting rehashing the same hazards and poor practices.