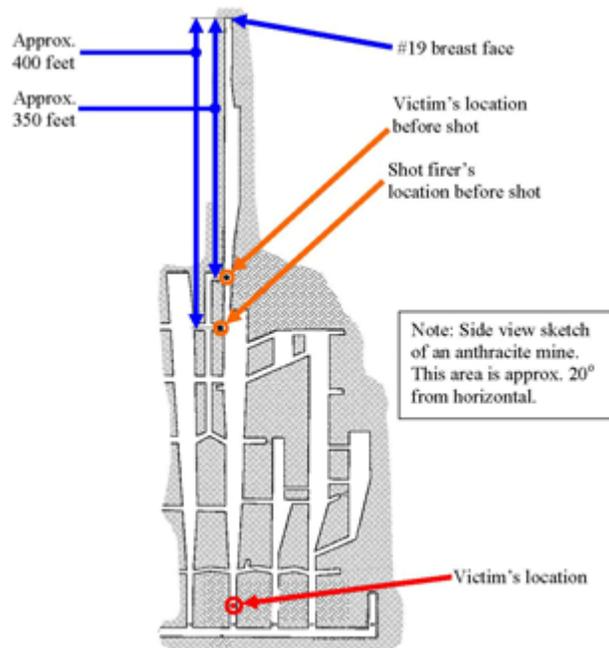




Fatality #42 - October 23, 2006
Ignition or Explosion of Gas or Dust - Underground - PA
R & D Coal Co Inc – R & D Coal Co. Inc

COAL MINE FATALITY - On October 23, 2006, a blaster with 25 years of mining experience was fatally injured from the forces of a methane explosion initiated by blasting. The victim, working with the shot firer, had just completed drilling and loading six holes in the face before moving outby to fire the shot. The victim and the shot firer stood approximately 350' and 400' outby the face of the #19 breast, respectively. After the victim nodded his cap lamp, to indicate "all clear", the shot firer detonated the explosives and heard three explosions. The first two sounded normal while the concussion from the third was excessive. The victim was eventually found near the bottom of the #19 breast.



Best Practices

- Ensure that the face to be blasted and all outby areas are ventilated in accordance with the mine's approved ventilation plan.
- Ensure that explosives are loaded in the presence of and under the direction of a qualified person, and boreholes are stemmed according to 30 CFR 75.1322.
- Ensure that those miners who handle explosives are properly trained in blasting procedures.
- Ensure that a qualified person ascertains that all miners are located safely outby his or her location, and that methane tests are conducted immediately before detonating the shot.
- Ensure that tests are conducted using a blasting multimeter, galvanometer or other instrument designed specifically for such use.

This is the 42nd fatality reported in calendar year 2006 in the coal mining industry. As of this date in 2005, there were 16 fatalities reported in the coal mining industry. This is the 18th fatality classified as Ignition/Explosion of Gas/Dust for calendar year 2006.