



News Release

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MSHA Fines Kentucky Operator \$360,000 after Mine Fatalities

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) today fined a Kentucky mine operator \$360,000 for safety violations contributing to the deaths of two miners at Stillhouse Mining LLC’s No. 1 mine in Harlan County, Ky. on Aug. 3, 2005. Two miners died when a section of the roof fell during retreat mining.

“The safety and health of miners must be protected every day. The failure of any mine operator to provide safe working conditions carries a high risk for their miners and will not be tolerated,” said David G. Dye, MSHA’s acting administrator. “MSHA will assess strong penalties, as in this case, when a miner suffered fatal injuries because the operator failed to provide safe working conditions.”

A section foreman and a scoop operator suffered fatal injuries following the roof fall. MSHA cited the company for three failures to comply with the approved roof-control plan, failure to adequately support or control the roof in an area where miners worked or traveled, failure to correct known hazardous conditions or post the area with warnings and failure to provide the scoop operator with task training in the operation of mobile roof support units. The fines MSHA has assessed for safety violations contributing to this accident are as follows:

- failure to follow approved roof control plan, 30 CFR 75.220(a)(1), three violations, \$60,000 apiece;
- failure to adequately support or control roof, 30 CFR 75.220(a), \$60,000;
- failure to immediately correct or post alerts regarding hazardous conditions, 30 CFR 75.363(a), \$60,000; and
- failure to provide adequate task training to a miner, 30 CFR 48.7, \$60,000.

MSHA found that the operator was highly negligent for two of the three roof control plan violations and for the training violation. The agency determined the company’s reckless disregard resulted in the third roof control plan violation.

MSHA can assess fines ranging from \$60 to \$60,000 per violation depending on the nature of the violation, level of negligence, and several legal factors.

Stillhouse Mining LLC has 30 days to appeal the fines.

For more information about MSHA, please visit www.msha.gov.

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