

# News Release



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## **U.S. Department of Labor's MSHA issues \$761,000 in fines for flagrant violations against mine operator in Harlan County, Ky.**

**ARLINGTON, Va.** – The U.S. Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) has assessed \$761,000 in fines against Stillhouse Mining LLC for safety violations found during a recent inspection of the company's Mine No. 1. Four citations issued during the inspection were cited as "flagrant violations" under the Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response (MINER) Act.

"Mine operators that show reckless disregard for the well-being of their workers must be held accountable for their actions," said Richard E. Stickler, assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health. "It was highly likely that a miner would have been seriously injured if these conditions were allowed to persist, so the purpose of this enforcement action is to prevent accidents and injuries from occurring in the first place."

A flagrant violation is defined as "a reckless or repeated failure to make reasonable efforts to eliminate a known violation of a mandatory safety and health standard that substantially and proximately caused, or reasonably could have been expected to cause, death or serious bodily injury." Under the MINER Act, a civil penalty of up to \$220,000 may be assessed for each flagrant violation.

The four citations that were determined to be flagrant violations and their penalties are:

- Failure to comply with main mine fan stoppage requirements: \$212,700
- Failure to comply with requirements for intentional changes in the ventilation system: \$212,700
- Failure to comply with the approved roof control plan: \$177,600
- Failure to perform a pre-shift examination of the workplace prior to the start of work: \$158,000

**TOTAL FLAGRANT PENALTIES: \$761,000**

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