

News Release



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U.S. Department of Labor's MSHA hands out maximum civil penalties against Illinois mine operator

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) has issued \$440,000 in fines against Wabash Mine Holding Co. for safety violations found during a routine inspection of the company's Wabash Mine in Wabash County, Ill. Two citations issued during MSHA's inspection of the mine 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, and 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 two citations that were determined to be flagrant violations, and their penalties, are:

- Failure to adequately support the roof: \$220,000
- Failure to follow the approved roof control plan: \$220,000

TOTAL FLAGRANT PENALTIES: \$440,000

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