



News Release

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MSHA announces results of January impact inspections

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration today announced that federal inspectors issued 253 citations, orders and safeguards during special impact inspections conducted at 12 coal mines and four metal/nonmetal mines last month. The coal mines were issued 171 citations, 15 orders and two safeguards, while the metal/nonmetal operations were issued 64 citations and one order.

These inspections, which began in force in April 2010 following the explosion at the Upper Big Branch Mine, involve mines that merit increased agency attention and enforcement due to their poor compliance history or particular compliance concerns, including high numbers of violations or closure orders; frequent hazard complaints or hotline calls; plan compliance issues; inadequate workplace examinations; a high number of accidents, injuries or illnesses; fatalities; and adverse conditions such as increased methane liberation, faulty roof conditions and inadequate ventilation.

As an example from last month, on Jan. 13, an impact inspection was conducted during the second shift at Perry County Coal Corp.’s E4-1 Mine in Perry County, Ky. The inspection team, which captured and monitored the phones to prevent advance notice of its arrival, issued 35 citations and three orders. The mine’s last impact inspection, conducted in May 2011, had resulted in 27 citations and one order.

Following January’s inspection, the mine was issued unwarrantable failure orders for noncompliance with the ventilation plan by failing to maintain a sufficient air volume at the end of the wing curtain when more than 18 inches of rock is being mined. (A wing curtain is a piece of flame-resistant brattice cloth used to direct air current to temporarily ventilate faces, seals or other areas of the mine.) This violation exposed miners to the risk of silicosis, black lung and a potential explosion. The mine operator also failed to control draw rock that extended from 32 crosscuts outby to the working face (approximately 2,080 feet), which exposed miners to the risk of being struck, injured or killed by pieces of falling roof. The mine operator further failed to maintain a scoop in permissible condition so that it was not a potential ignition source for explosive gasses as well as to conduct an adequate weekly examination of the same scoop.

Inspectors also found that the primary and secondary escapeways, along with required lifelines, were improperly maintained, which could severely hamper miners’ efforts to evacuate the mine in the event of an emergency.

As a second example from last month, on the same day, MSHA conducted an impact inspection during the second shift at K and D Mining Inc.’s Mine No. 17 in Harlan County, Ky. The inspection team, which captured and monitored the mine phones, issued 21 citations and seven orders. The last impact inspection conducted at this mine had occurred in August 2010, resulting in 14 citations and six orders.

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During January's visit, inspectors observed eight conditions that were the result of unwarrantable failures by the mine operator. Six involved failure to maintain the conveyer belts in safe operating condition and accumulation of combustible materials along the belt lines. Two belt lines were found to have missing or stuck rollers, causing friction and creating the potential for an ignition. Accumulations of combustible material were found along three belt lines, which are required to be examined at each shift.

Two 104(d) withdrawal orders were issued for the mine operator's failure to conduct an adequate exam of the section power center, which was found to be improperly maintained. Inspectors found evidence of severe arcing between receptacles on the power center, as well as on the male plugs of electrical equipment.

The mine operator also failed to comply with the roof control plan, according to inspectors. They observed a hill seam (rock fissure) that was tied in with several stress cracks. The hill seam and stress cracks extended across the pillar line for a distance of approximately 115 feet. The mine operator had not installed additional support as required by the roof control plan.

"While the impact inspection program has resulted in improved compliance in mines across the country, the seriousness of the violations found at these two operations demonstrates why targeted enforcement continues to be necessary to protect the health and safety of miners," said Joseph A. Main, assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health.

Since April 2010, MSHA has conducted 403 impact inspections, which have resulted in a total of 7,162 citations, 718 orders and 26 safeguards.

Editor's note: A spreadsheet containing the results of impact inspections in January 2012 accompanies this news release.

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MSHA Monthly Impact Inspection List

(January 2012)

January 2012

Coal

Mine Information						Type of Issuance				S&S Information				Issuances - Type of Action								Justifications																						
District	State	Mine ID	Controller Name	Operator Name	Mine Name	Cit	Orders	Safe -guards (Coal only)	Total	S&S	Non-S&S	Total	S&S Rate	104(a)	104(b)	104(d)(1) Citation	104(d)(1) Order	104(d)(2)	104(e)(2)	314(b)	103(k)	104(g)(1)	103(j)	107(a)	Total	1. Operator Tactics	2. Hazard Complaints /Hotline Calls	3. Plan Compliance Issues	4. Inadequate Exams	5. Accidents, Injuries, Illnesses	6. Fatal Accidents	7. Enforcement History	8. Adverse Conditions											
District 02	PA	3608603	J Clifford Forrest III	Rosebud Mining Company	Tracy Lynne	2	0	0	2	2	0	2	100.00%	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1							1	1									
District 03	WV	4604387	GenPower Holdings LP; James L. Laurita Jr	Dana Mining Company LLC	Prime No. 1 Mine	10	0	0	10	1	9	10	10.00%	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10		1																
District 04	WV	4604236	Walter Energy Incorporated	Maple Coal Co	Maple Eagle No 1 Mine	7	3	1	11	5	5	10	50.00%	7	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	11		1																	
District 05	VA	4407223	Alpha Natural Resources, Inc.	Paramont Coal Company Virginia LLC	Deep Mine 41	5	0	1	6	3	2	5	60.00%	5	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6		1																	
District 06	KY	1518839	Alliance Resource Partners LP	Excel Mining LLC	Van Lear Mine	29	2	0	31	15	16	31	48.39%	29	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31	1																		
District 07	KY	1517903	Jack H Ealy	K and D Mining Inc.	Mine No.17	21	7	0	28	17	11	28	60.71%	20	0	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	1		1	1															
District 07	KY	1518565	TECO Energy Inc	Perry County Coal Corporation	E4-1	35	3	0	38	14	24	38	36.84%	34	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	38			1	1	1														
District 07	KY	1518182	Horace Garrison Hill	D & C Mining Corporation	D & C Mining Corporation	18	0	0	18	7	11	18	38.89%	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	1																		
District 08	IL	1103054	Peabody Energy	Big Ridge Inc	Willow Lake Portal	11	0	0	11	3	8	11	27.27%	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11																			
District 09	CO	0503505	Deseret Generation & Transmission Co-operative	Blue Mountain Energy Inc	Deserado Mine	7	0	0	7	2	5	7	28.57%	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7		1																	
District 09	TX	4103101	NACCO Industries Inc	The Sabine Mining Company	South Hallsville No 1 Mine	3	0	0	3	0	3	3	0.00%	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3		1																	
District 12	WV	4608268	James River Coal Company	Rockhouse Creek Development, LLC	No. 6	23	0	0	23	11	12	23	47.83%	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23																			
12						National Totals				171	15	2	188	80	106	186	43.01%	169	0	2	10	5	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	188	4	4	3	3	3	1	8	5

January 2012

Metal/Nonmetal

Mine Information						Type of Issuance				S&S Information				Issuances - Type of Action								Justifications																
District	State	Mine ID	Controller Name	Operator Name	Mine Name	Cit	Orders	Safe -guards (Coal only)	Total	S&S	Non-S&S	Total	S&S Rate	104(a)	104(b)	104(d)(1) Citation	104(d)(1) Order	104(d)(2)	104(e)(2)	314(b)	103(k)	104(g)(1)	103(j)	107(a)	Total	1. Operator Tactics	2. Hazard Complaints /Hotline Calls	3. Plan Compliance Issues	4. Inadequate Exams	5. Accidents, Injuries, Illnesses	6. Fatal Accidents	7. Enforcement History	8. Adverse Conditions					
SC	NM	2900159	Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold Inc	Freeport-McMoRan Tyrone Inc	Tyrone Mine	15	1	0	16	8	7	15	53.33%	14	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	16	1											
NE	VT	4300351	Omya Industries Inc	Omya Inc	Verpol Plant	6	0	0	6	1	5	6	16.67%	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6		1											
WE	ID	1000082	U S Silver Corporation	U.S. Silver - Idaho, Inc.	Galena	27	0	0	27	8	19	27	29.63%	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27		1										
WE	CA	0404075	Heidelberg Cement AG	Lehigh Southwest Cement Co.	Lehigh Permanente Cement Co.	16	0	0	16	6	10	16	37.50%	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	1	1											
4						National Totals				64	1	0	65	23	41	64	35.94%	63	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	65	2	2	0	1	2	0	0	3	1	6	

Total	16	National Totals				235	16	2	253	103	147	250	41.20%	232	0	3	10	5	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	253	6	6	3	4	5	1	11	6
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