



# News Release

Connect with DOL at  
<http://social.dol.gov!>



U.S. Department of Labor For Immediate Release  
Office of Public Affairs  
Philadelphia, Pa.  
Release Number: 11-852-PHI

June 14, 2011  
Contact: Jesse Lawder  
Phone: 202-693-4659  
Email: [lawder.jesse@dol.gov](mailto:lawder.jesse@dol.gov)

## **MSHA's newly formed Coal District 12 begins operations**

**ARLINGTON, Va.** – The U.S. Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration today announced that the newly formed District 12 office within the agency's Coal Mine Safety and Health division has begun operations. MSHA initiated the process of splitting the agency's jurisdiction over southern West Virginia coal mines – formerly all covered by District 4 – into two separate districts earlier this year.

The new office, in its formative stages, eventually will be located in Pineville but for now is temporarily housed at the National Mine Health and Safety Academy in Beaver. It will have jurisdiction over field offices in Pineville, Logan and Princeton. District 4 will remain in Mt. Hope and will oversee field offices in Mt. Hope, Mt. Carbon, Madison and Summersville.

“The creation of an additional office in a part of the country with the highest concentration of coal mines has been one of my goals since coming to MSHA,” said Joseph A. Main, assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health. “Splitting this district will allow MSHA to more effectively execute its mission, provide adequate oversight and keep pace with the evolution of the coal industry.”

The production of southern West Virginia coal tends to be in higher demand globally. Over the past several years, MSHA had focused significant additional resources on District 4 in order to keep up with industry expansion and meet requirements and expectations since passage of the Mine Improvement and Emergency Response Act in 2006, including new administration initiatives designed to strengthen health and safety protections for the nation's miners. The agency had attempted to address increasing activity in District 4 by hiring additional personnel, making overtime available and allocating personnel from other districts to complete mandated inspections.

Timothy Watkins, formerly an assistant district manager in Pikeville, Ky., and a mining engineer, has been selected as the new District 12 manager. His staff eventually will be structured like that of other coal district offices. Charles Carpenter recently was selected as manager of District 4.

The District 12 office can be reached by telephone at 304-253-5237.

###