

News Release



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MSHA Issues Guidance for Developing Emergency Response Plans *Helps Miners Escape Accidents and Protect Miners Trapped After Accidents*

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) has issued guidance to underground coal operators to help ensure that miners have available the equipment they need to safely evacuate a mine following an accident, or to protect them if they are trapped.

“All underground coal mines must have the materials necessary to save and preserve lives after a serious accident,” said David G. Dye, acting administrator of MSHA.

Emergency response plans required by the Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act of 2006 – known as the MINER Act -- are due to MSHA district offices for approval by Aug. 14. Emergency response plans must include:

- Installation of post-accident communications technology likely to survive an accident;
- A system capable of tracking all underground personnel, so their pre-accident locations can be known until technology allows for post-accident tracking;
- Storage of breathable air for escaping miners and those who might become trapped after an accident,
- Installation of lifelines to help guide miners safely out of mines in smoky conditions;
- Training for all underground personnel on evacuation procedures and hands-on training in the use of self-contained self rescuers;
- A plan to promptly notify key personnel and emergency responders in the event of an accident; and,
- Storage for materials that provide shelter for and sustain trapped miners.

The full text of the MSHA’s Program Policy Letter addressing these requirements is available online at www.msha.gov.

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