

News Release



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MSHA, United Mine Workers of America Career Centers sign cooperative agreement *\$1.45 million grant to fund mine rescue team training programs*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration today announced it has signed a cooperative agreement with the United Mine Workers of America Career Centers Inc., in which the UMWACC will receive \$1,450,000 to develop classroom and simulated rescue training programs for mine rescue teams.

“The UMWACC and MSHA have continued a close working relationship through various contracts and cooperative agreements established in September 2008 and 2009,” said Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis. “The partnership has developed successful training programs and competitions for mine rescue teams and first responders.”

“The Sago, Aracoma and Darby mine disasters of 2006 indicated the need to better train and prepare mine rescue teams to effectively respond to mine emergencies at underground coal mines,” added Gregory R. Wagner M.D., MSHA’s deputy assistant secretary for policy. “One of the best methods for preparing miners to respond to an emergency is through simulated mine emergency training.”

The Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act of 2006, signed in the wake of these high-profile disasters, called for enhancing mine rescue teams and the development of up-to-date accident response plans

Under the cooperative agreement, training may be conducted in classrooms, mine simulation lab facilities or, where possible, at mine sites with mine personnel. While distance learning is not excluded from the options, the focus of the program will be on training in real and simulated mine conditions.

Training likely will be conducted at the following locations: The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health’s Pittsburgh Research Laboratory in Bruceton, Pa.; the National Mine Health and Safety Academy Mine Simulation Laboratory in Beaver, W.Va.; and the Mining Technology and Training Center in Ruff Creek, Pa.

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