



# News Release

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Contact: Amy Louviere  
Phone: 202-693-9423  
Email: [louviere.amy@dol.gov](mailto:louviere.amy@dol.gov)

## **MSHA announces results of February impact inspections**

### ***Fork Creek No. 1 Mine in Boone County, W.Va., cited for numerous ventilation violations***

**ARLINGTON, Va.** – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration today announced that federal inspectors issued 196 citations, 24 orders and three safeguards during special impact inspections conducted at 11 coal mines and three metal/nonmetal mines last month.

The monthly 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. These matters include 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; adverse conditions such as increased methane liberation, faulty roof conditions and inadequate ventilation; and respirable dust.

As an example from last month, MSHA conducted an impact inspection during the evening shift Feb. 19 at Coal River Mining LLC’s Fork Creek No. 1 Mine in Boone County, W.Va. Ventilation was the main focus of the inspection and resulted in 16 issuances – 13 of which were closure orders for the operator’s unwarrantable failure to comply with health and safety standards. This impact inspection was MSHA’s first at this mine.

“In spite of finding overall improvements in compliance since we began conducting impact inspections, examples like Fork Creek No. 1 show what takes place at some mines when MSHA is not expected to be there and illustrates the importance of our impact inspection strategy,” said Joseph A. Main, assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health. “The conditions our inspectors observed, which resulted in closure orders, demonstrated a complete disregard for the health and safety of miners and for safe mining practices.”

The photos were captured to prevent advance notice of the inspection. MSHA found that Fork Creek Mine No. 1 failed to follow its approved ventilation plan in numerous instances. The team observed two continuous mining machines operating simultaneously on the same split of air, which is prohibited. A number of water sprays on one of the continuous mining machines, used to control dust and the ignition of coal dust or methane, were inoperative. Ventilation curtains, which direct the flow of air in the mine and move respirable dust and methane out of working areas, were either missing or rolled up against the mine roof while equipment and miners were working in the area.

One machine cut and loaded rock and coal with the ventilation curtain rolled up for a distance of more than 60 feet, exceeding the allowable curtain setback distance. Inspectors found another machine cutting and loading more than 50 feet past the last crosscut with the entire line curtain rolled up and tied against the mine roof at distances from 30 to 50 feet in the entry. Inspectors also observed a roof bolting machine operating in an area with no ventilation because line curtains were not in place. These failures to properly ventilate the mine to control methane and respirable coal dust exposed miners to substantially increased levels of respirable dust that causes black lung disease and the potential for an explosion due to unsafe accumulations of methane and coal dust.

– more –

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Haulageways, used to travel within the mine, were not maintained wet to control dusty conditions. The operator allowed shuttle car equipment to operate with visible dust in suspension. The ventilation standard 75.370(a)(1), which requires mine ventilation plans to control methane and respirable dust, has been cited 25 times over a two-year period at this mine.

Additional orders and citations were issued for accumulations of combustible materials in the form of loose coal, lump coal and coal fines. Rockdust, used to prevent coal dust explosions, was not properly applied. The rockdust standard, 75.400, has been cited 34 times over a two-year period at this mine.

MSHA ordered two sections of the mine shut down until conditions could be improved. The operator implemented corrective actions, some of which took three days to complete in order to terminate the closure orders.

Since April 2010, MSHA has conducted 579 impact inspections and issued 10,036 citations, 946 orders and 43 safeguards.

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### MSHA Monthly Impact Inspection List

(February 2013)

February 2013

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 <small>(Coal only)</small>	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) Order	314(b)	103(k)	104(g)(1)	103(i)	107(a)	Total	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.				
District 03	OH	3300968	Rhino Resource Partners LP	Hopedale Mining LLC	Hopedale Mine	15	4	0	19	11	8	19	57.89%	15	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19	1											
District 03	OH	3301159	Robert E. Murray	The Ohio Valley Coal Company	Powhatan No. 6 Mine	22	2	1	25	5	19	24	20.83%	22	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	25		1											
District 04	WV	4605252	Arch Coal Inc	ICG Beckley LLC	Beckley Pocahontas Mine	12	0	0	12	3	9	12	25.00%	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12		1											
District 04	WV	4608763	James O. Bunn; Franklin D. Robertson	Coal River Mining LLC	Fork Creek No 1	3	13	0	16	16	0	16	100.00%	3	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	1												
District 05	VA	4407150	Alpha Natural Resources, Inc.	Mill Branch Coal Corp	Osaka Mine	24	0	0	24	9	15	24	37.50%	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24				1	1		1						
District 06	KY	1518839	Alliance Resource Partners LP	Excel Mining LLC	Van Lear Mine	13	0	1	14	3	10	13	23.08%	13	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	14			1				1						
District 07	KY	1519015	TECO Energy Inc	Perry County Coal Corporation	E4-2	12	0	1	13	3	9	12	25.00%	12	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	13														
District 09	UT	4200121	PacifiCorp	Energy West Mining Company	Deer Creek Mine	7	0	0	7	1	6	7	14.29%	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7		1											
District 09	AZ	0201195	Peabody Energy	Peabody Western Coal Company	Kayenta Mine	5	4	0	9	5	3	8	62.50%	5	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	9		1											
District 10	KY	1519358	Armstrong Energy Corporation LLC	Armstrong Coal Company Inc	Parkway Mine	8	0	0	8	4	4	8	50.00%	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8											1		
District 12	WV	4609062	Mechel Oao	Dynamic Energy Inc	Coal Mountain No 1 Surface	20	0	0	20	10	10	20	50.00%	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20										1			
<b>11</b>						<b>National Totals</b>				<b>141</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>42.94%</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

February 2013

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 <small>(Coal only)</small>	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) Order	314(b)	103(k)	104(g)(1)	103(i)	107(a)	Total	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.			
SE	AL	0100003	Lhoist Group	Lhoist North America of Alabama, LLC	O'Neal Quarry & Mill	5	0	0	5	2	3	5	40.00%	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5												
WE	NV	2602286	Barrick Gold Corp	Barrick Turquoise Ridge, Inc.	Turquoise Ridge	18	1	0	19	5	14	19	26.32%	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	19		1						1				
SC	TX	4102905	Aurcana Corporation	Rio Grande Mining Company	Shafter Mine	32	0	0	32	13	19	32	40.63%	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32												
<b>3</b>						<b>National Totals</b>				<b>55</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>35.71%</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>14</b>		<b>National Totals</b>		<b>196</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>41.10%</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>			