



# Performance Coal Company

P.O. Box 69

Naoma, WV

25140

March 5, 2010

**Mr. Robert G. Hardman**  
**Mine Safety and Health Administration**  
**100 Bluestone Road**  
**Mt. Hope, West Virginia 25880**

**Re: Upper Big Branch Mine**  
**MSHA ID 46- 08436**  
**State Permit U-3042-92**  
**Drill Cuttings Removal and Ventilation Plan**

Dear Sir:

Enclosed for your review and approval, please find the proposed drill cuttings removal and ventilation plan for the Upper Big Branch Return Air Shaft. The project is scheduled to begin as soon as possible.

If you should have any further question or need any additional information please feel free to contact me at (304) 854-1761.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Performance Coal Company

Eric Lilly  
Mine Engineer

MSHA  
MOUNT HOPE, WV

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**DRILL CUTTINGS REMOVAL AND VENTILATION PLAN  
FOR UPPER BIG BRANCH RETURN SHAFT  
GENERAL INFORMATION**

DATE: 03-05-10

MSHA ID NO.: 46-08436  
WV FILE NO.: U-3042-92

COMPANY NAME: PERFORMANCE COAL COMPANY

MINE NAME: Upper Big Branch Mine

ADDRESS: PO Box 69, Naoma, WV 25140

LOCATION: COUNTY: Raleigh CITY: Whitesville STATE: WV

TOP OF SHAFT ELEVATION: 1804.7 feet

BOTTOM OF SHAFT ELEVATION: Approx. 797 feet

SHAFT DEPTH: 1007.7 feet

SHAFT DIAMETER: 20 feet

PRESIDENT: Chris Blanchard (304) 854-1852

HEALTH & SAFETY DIRECTOR: Berman Cornett (304) 854-1761

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## DRILL CUTTINGS REMOVAL AND VENTILATION PLAN FOR UPPER BIG BRANCH RETURN SHAFT

Shaft construction will be performed by a contract company. This company will submit their required plans to your office.

The cuttings from the shaft will be removed by Performance Coal Company personnel and/or approved contractors. The cuttings will be removed by underground equipment and placed in crosscuts and/or transported to the surface by conveyor belt. The attached map represents the proposed ventilation and cutting removal plan. Find below safety precautions that will be followed during shaft drilling and removal of cuttings.

1. Permanent roof at the bottom of the shaft is supported in accordance with the approved roof control plan. During no time will employees be subjected to unsupported roof or to hazards of falling material. Entrances other than the ones being used to remove drill cuttings will be dangered off to prevent access. Posts on 5-foot centers with brattice boards and danger signs will be placed in the remaining entries.
2. At no time will personnel be working downwind of the shaft during the boring operation, ventilation in the shaft will be provided by the drilling company and will have a minimum of 600 cfm, with a 100 psi compressor blowing through the annulus around the drill pipe and passing over the cutterhead. This air will flow down the shaft into the return aircourse. Performance Coal Company will provide a minimum of 9,000 cfm at the bottom of the airshaft (see attached map) while boring.
3. Communications between the surface and the bottom of the shaft will be comprised of mine phones to communicate to the responsible person on the surface of the mine who will communicate with the drill operator by two-way radio.
4. Drill cuttings will not be allowed to accumulate at the bottom of the shaft to the extent that air is blocked coming down the shaft.
5. Prior to drilling the shaft through to the surface (5 feet), most of the cuttings will be removed at the bottom of the shaft and the shaft bottom area will be regulated. All personnel will be removed from the mine before raiseboring can continue and hole-out.
6. The remainder of the shaft will then be drilled through to the surface. Only after an examination is made of the shaft bottom and gate roads including the face areas will anyone be allowed to re-enter the mine.
7. Preshift and onshift examinations will be conducted in the area of the bottom of the shaft. Results of the examinations, including air readings and methane levels, will be recorded in a book kept on the surface.
8. Controls restricting airflow through the shaft will remain in place until a revision to the ventilation plan is submitted and approved.

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**ROOF CONTROL PLAN FOR THE RETURN AIR SHAFT  
UPPER BIG BRANCH MINE  
MSHA ID 46-08436  
WV STATE U-3042-92**

The area of the proposed shaft was mined in May 2006. The roof at the bottom of the shaft is supported according to the approved roof control plan at the time of mining. Entrances other than the one being used to remove drill cuttings will be dangered off to prevent access. At no time will employees be subjected to unsupported roof or to hazard of falling rock.

**MUCK DISPOSAL**

Once raising operations have begun, a permissible battery powered scoop or continuous miner will be utilized to remove the muck from the shaft bottom. This muck will be placed in crosscuts, rooms or entries near the shaft that are not critical for ventilation or escapeways, or loaded onto a belt. During times of raise drilling, a qualified person will be stationed in the area of the shaft bottom. This person will perform required methane checks and will observe the accumulation of the muck at the bottom of the shaft to prevent buildup from blocking the shaft bottom and inhibiting airflow through the shaft. Before the raise drill starts cutting, a qualified person will test for methane at the bottom of the shaft. Water will be available at the belt tailpiece to wet down the dust or muck pile, if necessary.

**PILOT HOLE DRILLING PRECAUTIONS**

When drilling the pilot hole, methane will be continuously monitored on the surface. When the hole is within 100 feet of the coal seam the area will be dangered off for a radius of 50 ft. When the hole reaches to within 25ft of the coal seam, no one will be allowed within 200ft of the bottom of the proposed hole location.

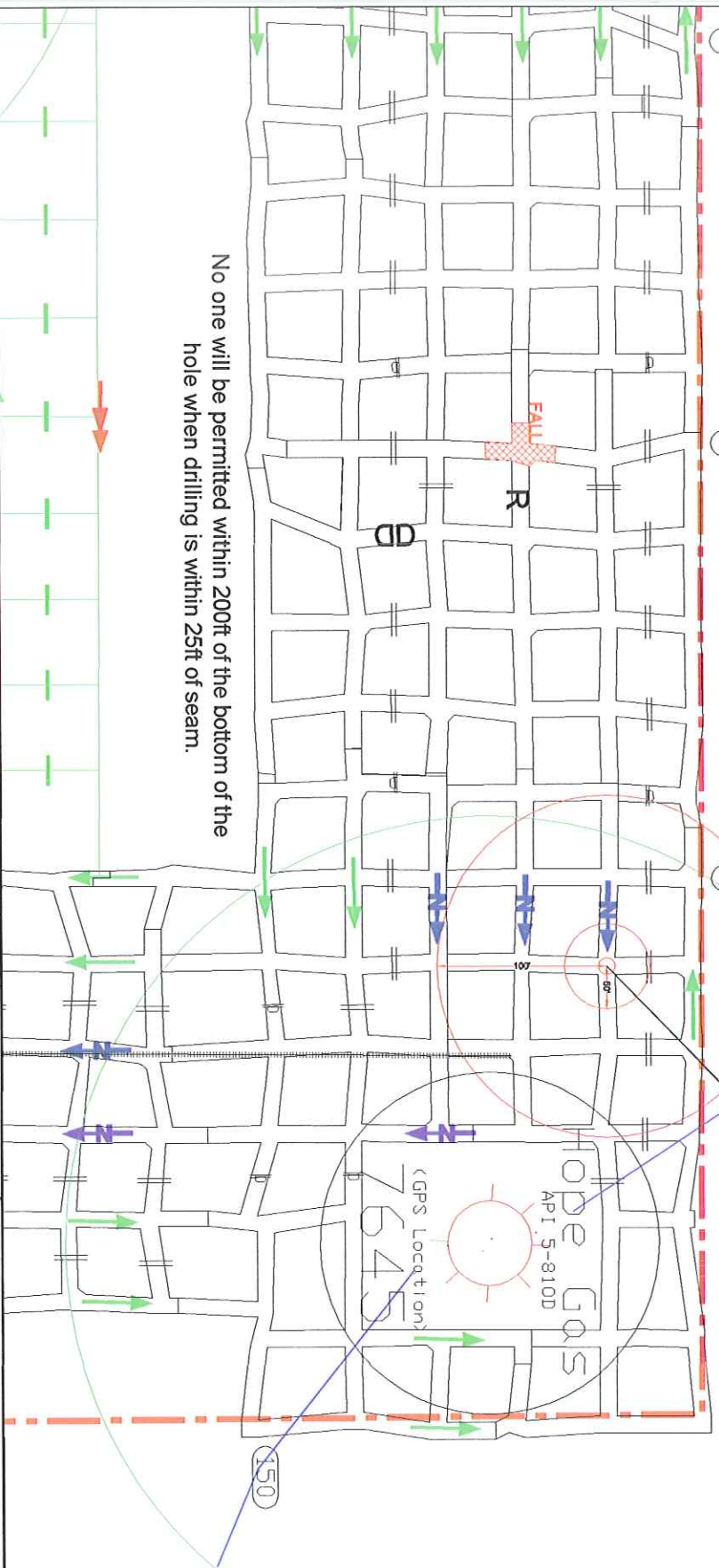
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The area will be endangered off a minimum distance of 50 feet from hole.

**PROPOSED 20' AIR SHAFT**  
 Bottom Elevation: 797ft  
 Surface Elevation: 1804.7ft

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No one will be permitted within 200ft of the bottom of the hole when drilling is within 25ft of seam.



	INTAKE AIR		FALL
	SECONDARY INTAKE AIR		R
	RETURN AIR		S
	PROPOSED BELT		
	EXISTING BELT		
	APPROVED MINE LIMIT LINE		
	TRACK		
	ACTIVE OR INACTIVE GAS WELL		
	PLUGGED GAS WELL		
	STREAM		
	INTERMITTENT STREAM		
	WATER		
	FAN		

	BOX CHECK		PERMANENT STOPPINGS
	MAN DOOR		PROPOSED STOPPINGS
	OVERCAST		PROPOSED OVERCAST
	PROPOSED OVERCAST		AIRLOCK DOOR
	REGULATOR		CHECK CURTAIN
	CHECK CURTAIN		PROPOSED BELT HEAD
	PROPOSED BELT HEAD		BELT HEAD

Denotes areas posted by mine Foreman's Notices

PREPARED BY

**PERFORMANCE COAL COMPANY**  
 P.O. BOX 69, NAOMA, WV 25140

**UPPER BIG BRANCH MINE**

MSHA - ID No. 46-08436      WV ID No. U-3042-92

DATE: 01/29/10      SCALE: 1"=200'

DRAWN BY: Rt. 3 Staff      DWG No. 1 of 1

CHECKED BY:

0'      200'      400'      600'

Shaft Plan - Pilot Hole Drilling