

PITS AND QUARRIES

BUREAU OF MINING AND RECLAMATION

NON-COAL MINERALS

1984

Any inquiries on non-coal minerals should be referred to the Bureau of Mining and Reclamation 717-787-7846 - Charles Gummo.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

NON-COAL

Name of Victim: Julius Cardillo
Address: R.D. No. 1, Bulger, PA 15019
Name of Mine: Cinder Plant - Washington County
Name of Company: Bologna Mining (Penn Processing Tipple)
Date of Accident: February 14, 1984

John Davidson
Surface Mine Conservation Inspector Greensburg District Office

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

Victim arrived for daylight shift at 6:00 a.m. and loaded four trucks at coal tipple. The foreman then sent him up to the cinder screening operation to load some trucks there. About 20 minutes later one of the truck drivers waiting at the cinder pile called on the CB and asked where the loader operator was. Foreman Edward Moore went to investigate and saw the machine down over a bank, setting on its wheels, with the cab crushed, and the motor running. No one witnessed the accident, but from the evidence at the site, these facts are known: The tracks of the machine proceeded in a straight line while the road curved to the left. There was no safety berm where the loader left the road. It rolled over 360° and came to rest on its wheels. A superficial examination by the MSHA officials indicated that the hydraulic lines and brakes were in working order. Where the machine left the road there was no safety berm at all, and further out the road the maximum height was 18". The midpoint of the axle was 28½". The machine was a 1985 Michigan 175 111 A Rubber-Tired Loader serial number 5HAG121. The machine was not equipped with rollover protection and may not have been able to be modified to accept it.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

Unknown. Contributing factors are as follows: 1. Operator was not that familiar with this site. For the last 3 years most of his time was spent loading coal at the Lauderbaugh job. Because of lay-offs he was transferred to the West Virginia job as an equipment operator. Most recently he was operating a pan at the job until rainfall prevented the operation of the pan and he was transferred to the tipple on the afternoon of 2/13/84. When traveling to the cinder tipple, the machines normally use the lower road (where the machine landed) while trucks use the upper road. Operator may have thought he was on the lower road. 2. Darkness was contributing factor, and there may have been an optical illusion where another cinder pile on the fare side of the lower road gave the appearance that there was no drop-off. 3. The lack of safety berms on the road certainly contributed to the accident. 4. If the machine had been provided with roll-over protection and a safety belt, and the operator was using it, he most likely would still be alive. 5. Steering and brakes did not appear to have contributed to the accident. Although the brakes were not in the best shape, they would have stopped the machine. When the loader was started it did not move with the brakes applied.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Provide adequate safety berms at least as high as the mid-point of the axle of the largest machine using that road. Machines without adequate roll-over protection should not be operated where there is a danger of rolling over. Make sure that all employees are familiar with the mine site before they are assigned work.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS ACCIDENT

Primary cause unknown. Possible operator error due to unfamiliarity with mine site, and darkness. Although not required by state law or regulations, Bologna Coal should provide adequate safety berms on all roads, and roll-over protection on all machines where there is a danger of roll-over.