

# **FATAL ACCIDENTS**

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim:	Dennis Rager
Address:	211 Spring St., Richeyville, PA 15358
Name of Mine:	No. 51 Somerset Portal
Name of Company:	Beth-Energy Mines, Inc.
Date of Accident:	February 27, 1985 - Somerset Twp., Washington Co.
Jesse L. Bolen, Mine Inspector	5th Bituminous District

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

On Wednesday, February 27, 1985, at approximately 10:30 A.M., the victim was positioned in a sheltered clearance inside the side track when the accident occurred. The accident resulted in the death of Dennis Rager, Motorman, age 39, with six years, six months experienced at this occupation. Mr. Rager had eight years mining experience. Nature of the injury was pelvic and lower trunk.

Locomotive was pulling an empty trip out of 6 side track. Deceased was positioned in a sheltered clearance inside the side track. One of the cars derailed hitting a corner; for some reason deceased left the shelter hole and was standing on the clearance side of the curve. When the car hit the corner, it derailed two other empty coal cars that were being pulled and deceased was caught between these two cars and the rib.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

Same as above.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Person shall stay in the clear of moving coal cars and have positive communication with the person running the motor. All trips should be checked before moving to insure that no mine cars are derailed. Company was asked to submit a communication plan to be used by the motorman that will be transporting loaded and empty trips throughout the mine.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim:	Ellsworth Muir, Jr.
Address:	R.D. 2, Box 153-B, Clymer, PA 15728
Name of Mine:	Main Complex
Name of Company:	Greenwich Collieries
Date of Accident:	March 5, 1985 - Barnesboro Twp., Cambria Co.
Joseph J. Ardini, Mine Inspector	18th Bituminous District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On March 5, 1985, at approximately 2:45 A.M., Ellsworth Muir, Jr., mechanic with six years eleven months experience at this occupation at the Greenwich Collieries in Barnesboro, Cambria County was fatally injured. He had fourteen years of mining experience.

The victim was in the reclaim tunnel at the Main Complex and had his right hand on the come-along and his left hand to the start switch and was electrocuted.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

The overload protection provided by the FH-50 Westinghouse heaters was too high. (The maximum amps of the pump motor was 2.0 amps and the overload heaters were from 21.8 amps to 23.9 amps).

The frame ground connection from the pump frame to the conduit was not a proper mechanical or electrical connection.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

All electric motors supplied with operating power via jacketed cable, or single conductors in flexible conduit, and not directly mounted to a common ground medium, shall have frame grounding supplied by two separate ground wires. One of these ground wires and its connections shall be visible at all times where practicable.

All overloads and circuit breakers protecting those motors shall be checked and those circuits that do not have proper protection, according to the National Electric Code shall be corrected.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim: Ernest Eugene Nichol  
Address: R.D. 2, Cherry Tree, PA 15724  
Name of Mine: Penn Hill No. 2  
Name of Company: Stanford Mining Company  
Date of Accident: April 25, 1985 - Clymer, Indiana County

John A. Swick and Andrew Kentula  
Mine Inspector's 17th Bituminous District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On April 25, 1985, at approximately 10:45 A.M., Ernest E. Nichol, Section Foreman with six years experience at this occupation with the Stanford Mining Company in Clymer, Pennsylvania, Indiana County was fatally injured. He had fourteen years service at this mine and total mining years experience of eighteen years.

The victim trammed the roof bolting machine from No. 3 entry into the crosscut between the No. 3 and 4 entries. He positioned the machine and started to drill a hole in the roof. Before he finished drilling this hole, the regular operator arrived and finished drilling the bolt hole. The victim walked around the machine and slid the strap over the top of the roof bolting machine. The operator lowered the A.T.R.S. from the roof. He positioned the end of the strap while standing under unsupported roof. The operator raised the A.T.R.S., then the operator put the first roof bolt in place, tightened it and torqued the bolt. As he was putting the wrench back on the machine, he heard the rock fall, which caught the victim while he was under the unsupported roof.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

The victim went out under unsupported roof to line up the end of the strap and the rock fell on him.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

1. No person to go beyond the last permanent roof support.
2. Do not cut through into any entry where the roof is not properly supported.
3. Strict compliance with the approved roof control plan.
4. All persons at this mine be instructed that they are not permitted to go out beyond permanent supports without first setting temporary supports.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim: Harvey Kintzel  
Address: R.D. #2, Box 614, Pine Grove, PA 17963  
Name of Mine: No. 7 Vein Slope  
Name of Company: Kintzel Coal Company  
Date of Accident: June 21, 1985 - Joliett, Tremont Township,  
Schuylkill County

Paul L. Hummel, Mine Inspector 6th Anthracite District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On June 21, 1985, at approximately 2:00 P.M., Harvey Kintzel, Assistant Mine Foreman with twenty-three years experience at this occupation and working fifteen years for Kintzel Coal Company in Joliett, Tremont Township, Schuylkill County was fatally injured. He had twenty-five years mining experience. Nature of injury was to all parts of his body due to forced fall.

The victim prepared and fired a blast in the No. 13 breast of the No. 2 level west section. After the charge was fired, he attempted to travel down the No. 12 breast to the second level west gangway, when a rush of coal and water broke from the face of No. 12 breast, driving the victim to the gangway level, causing his death.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

In-rush of coal and water from un-charted abandoned slope.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

A test drilling plan to be strictly enforced in the working faces of this section.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim:	David L. Krulia
Address:	Weedville, PA
Name of Mine:	Kougher No. 1 Strip
Name of Company:	Glen Irvan Corporation
Date of Accident:	August 16, 1985 - Brady Twp. - Clearfield County

Walter Kuzemchock, Surface Mine  
Inspector

Hawk Run District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On August 16, 1985, at 3:10 P.M., David L. Krulia, Loader Operator, with the Glen Irvan Corporation, Clearfield County was fatally injured. The victim had 10 years/7 months mining experience. Nature of injury was internal trauma (crushed) around lower back area.

On Tuesday, August 16, 1985, David Krulia was greasing the fittings on the right side of a 992B Loader when the shot rock of the working face collapsed. It appears that Mr. Krulia was attempting to escape up the loader's ladder when he was pinned between the ladder and what was estimated to be a five-ton boulder. The estimated time of the accident was 3:10 P.M. The victim had been loading trucks from this face for a 12-hour shift prior to the accident.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

The victim was servicing a 992B Loader, between the working face and loader, hindering his escape from rock falling from the working face.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Remove equipment to service area, away from pit, before performing service duties.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim:	Rick Wolfgang
Address:	Valley View, PA 17983
Name of Mine:	No. 2 Slope
Name of Company:	M.S.W. Coal Company
Date of Accident:	December 11, 1985 - Mable - Schuylkill County
Robert Whitmer, Jr., Mine Inspector	5th Anthracite District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On December 11, 1985, at 2:15 P.M., Rick Wolfgang, Laborer with two years of experience with M.S.W. Coal Company, Schuylkill County was fatally injured. Nature of injury was asphyxia, inhalation of smoke, carbon monoxide and products of combustion and explosion.

The Mine Foreman and miners drilled and charged three long holes 50 feet, 24 feet and 18 feet, along with two adobes on rock. It is evident a test for gas was not made prior to firing shots. This in turn ignited a pocket of methane along with the shots.

Although Rick Wolfgang was not involved in the explosion he however, climbed toward the first miner heading to rescue his father, Gene Wolfgang and Mr. Benner and in his haste without testing for mine gases entered an atmosphere of carbon monoxide gas where he was overcome and asphyxiated.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

A test for methane was not made prior to the firing of holes.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Test for methane should be made before and after firing holes and periodically throughout the working shift.

Men should be trained in the detection of mine gases and their effects.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim: Gene Wolfgang  
Address: Valley View, PA 17983  
Name of Mine: No. 2 Slope  
Name of Company: M.S.W. Coal Company  
Date of Accident: December 11, 1985 - Mable - Schuylkill County  
Robert Whitmer, Jr., Mine Inspector 5th Anthracite District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On December 11, 1985, at 2:15 P.M., Gene Wolfgang, Mine Foreman with nine years with M.S.W. Coal Company, Schuylkill County was fatally injured. He had twenty-five years mining experience. Nature of injury was asphyxia, inhalation of smoke, C.O., and products of combustion and explosion with second degree burns of face, fractured ribs and contusions of the lungs.

The Mine Foreman and miners drilled and charged three long holes 50 feet, 24 feet and 18 feet, along with two adobes on rock. It is evident a test for gas was not made prior to firing shots. This in turn ignited a pocket of methane along with the shots.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

A test for methane was not made prior to the firing of holes.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Test for methane should be made before and after firing holes and periodically throughout the working shift.



REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim: Frank Benner  
Address: Park Avenue, Valley View, PA 17983  
Name of Mine: No. 2 Slope  
Name of Company: M.S.W. Coal Company  
Date of Accident: December 11, 1985 - Mable - Schuylkill County

Robert Whitmer, Jr., Mine Inspector 5th Anthracite District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On December 11, 1985, at 2:15 P.M., Frank Beener, miner with three years with the M.S.W. Coal Company, Schuylkill County was fatally injured. He had eight years mining experience. Nature of injury was acute respiratory failure, massive pulmonary contusion hemorrhage due to blast effect of explosion. Second degree burns of the face and fractured ribs.

The Mine Foreman and miners drilled and charged three long holes 50 feet, 24 feet and 18 feet, along with two adobes on rock. It is evident a test for gas was not made prior to firing shots. This in turn ignited a pocket of methane along with the shots.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

A test for methane was not made prior to the firing of holes.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Test for methane should be made before and after firing holes and periodically throughout the working shift.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim:	Earl Romberger
Address:	Tower City, PA 17980
Name of Mine:	Buck Mountain Slope
Name of Company:	Mountain Top Coal Company
Date Of Accident:	December 12, 1985 - Williamstown - Schuylkill Co.

Paul L. Hummel, Mine Inspector                      6th Anthracite District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On December 12, 1985, at 6:30P.M., Earl Romberger, Mine Foreman with six years experience as mine foreman with Mountain Top Coal Co., Schuylkill County was fatally injured. He had fifteen years mining experience. Nature of injury was broken neck, chest injury, internal bleeding and shock.

The victim was drilling a rock cut in the face of the second opening slope with a jackhammer, (air powered) apparently drilled into a standing drill hole from a previous cut which was fired on December 11, 1985. The victim had drilled 5 new holes along side some holes which were standing with depths of 6 inches to 8 inches, on the west side of the face. When victim attempted to drill the center hole the jackhammer struck an undetermined amount of dynamite and the force caused the explosion.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

A more thorough examination of the working face by the victim could have resulted in the victim finding the dynamite which had not detonated.

Jackhammer striking an amount of dynamite imbedded in a hole from the previous rock cut, causing the explosion.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Miners to make certain all dynamite has been detonated before attempting to drill new holes. New drill holes to be placed a minimum of two feet from existing holes.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim:	Roger Koons
Address:	Tower City, PA 17980
Name of Mine:	Buck Mountain Slope
Name of Company:	Mountain Top Coal Company
Date of Accident:	December 12, 1985 - Williamstown - Schuylkill Co.
Date Victim Died:	December 15, 1985
Paul L. Hummel, Mine Inspector	6th Anthracite District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On December 12, 1985, at 6:30P.M., Roger Koons, Miner with three years experience as a miner with Mountain Top Coal Co., Schuylkill County was fatally injured. Victim died December 15th at the Polyclinic Medical Center, Harrisburg. Nature of injury was face and head injuries; brain damage.

The victim was assisting the mine foreman, who was drilling a rock cut in the face of the second opening slope with a jackhammer (air powered) apparently drilled into a standing drill hole from a previous cut which was fired on December 11, 1985.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

Jackhammer striking an amount of dynamite imbedded in a hole from the previous rock cut, causing the explosion.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Miners to make certain all dynamite has been detonated before attempting to drill new holes. New drill holes to be placed a minimum of two feet from existing holes.