

FATAL ACCIDENTS

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim:	Clayton Knorr
Address:	Biddle St., Gordon, Pa 17936
Name of Mine:	No. 1 Slope - Tremont Twp., Schuylkill Co.
Name of Company:	Rothermel Coal Company
Date of Accident:	January 7, 1986
Paul L. Hummel, Mine Inspector	6th Anthracite District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On January 7, 1986, at approximately 1:00 p.m., Clayton Knorr, age 21 with one day mining experience was fatally injured. Nature of injury was suffocation.

The miner was in the process of inserting a pin in the face to attach a pulley cable to the drag when the rib/roof gave way and a section of coal cracked the last two sets of the three piece timber and caused the material to cover the victim.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

The accident resulted from inadequate roof support. The operator was not following the roof support plan which was submitted and approved.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Timbering plans to be revised and followed. Working areas to be secured by timbers as to make said areas safe for workman. The Forepole System to be used.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim: Dean Smith
Address: R.D. #2, Boyers, PA 16020
Name of Mine: Mine Drainage Permit No. 10830109 - Butler Co.
Name of Company: Sunbeam Coal Corp.
Date of Accident: January 10, 1986

Henry G. Thomas
Surface Mine Conservation Inspector Knox District Office

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On January 10, 1986, at approximately 6:15 a.m., Dean Smith, age 57, Dozer Operator, with forty years of service, was fatally injured. Nature of injury was head.

The accident occurred at the Sunbeam Coal Corporation on the site of Mine Drainage Permit No. 10830109, West Sunbury in Butler County. An R-50 Euclid end dump truck driven by employee Todd Forrere had just finished dumping a load. The bed was still raised on the dump truck. Dozer operator Dean Smith, victim, pulled the dozer, a D-96, he was operating up in front of the end dump, within 7 feet of the bumper. He then got out of the cab and walked on the track to the front of the dozer. He motioned to the driver of the truck that he wanted to talk with him. The truck driver set the brake and left the cab of the truck to converse with the dozer operator. Upon reaching 2nd step on the truck, the truck began to move forward and struck the dozer directly on the blade. The dozer operator was knocked off the track and down behind the blade. Dozer traveled approximately 40.6 feet with the blade down, fatally injuring the dozer operator. It should be noted that both vehicles were located on a slight grade.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

Unsafe condition caused by the dozer operator with approximately 40 years of experience on the job.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Never should an operator leave the protection of a piece of equipment parked as described above to carry on a conversation with an operator of another piece of equipment.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS ACCIDENT

Responsibility of accident would have to lay with the victim, for as an experienced operator, he should not have placed himself in the position described.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim:	Andrew Woartyla
Address:	Box 2, Llewellyn, PA 17944
Name of Mine:	Middle Split Slope - Reilly Twp., Schuylkill Co.
Name of Company:	Woartyla Coal Co.
Date of Accident:	February 24, 1986

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

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On February 24, 1986, at approximately 1:20 p.m., Andrew Woartyla, age 56 with 35 years mining experience was fatally injured. Nature of injuries was multiple head and chest injuries -- blunt force trauma.

Mr. Woartyla, victim, was working in the slope and had stepped onto the bridle of the buggy as it was traveling up the slope approximately 210 feet from the bottom. Mr. Charles Bebelheimer who was in the buggy from the bottom stated after Mr. Woartyla stepped on the bridle it traveled another 50 feet and victim apparently lost his balance and slipped off the bridle in which the buggy ran over him and he fell down the slope 260 feet causing his death.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

Stepping on a moving buggy and riding on the bridle which is unsafe for travel. Victim should have stopped the buggy where he was and been inside of it when traveling up the slope.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Men should never step onto a moving gumboat or buggy and never ride the bridles.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim: Donald L. Hutton, Sr.
Address: (Berwindale) R.D., Irvona, PA 16656
Name of Mine: Little Mine No. 1 - SMP No. 17820132
Decatur Township, Clearfield Co.
Name of Company: Benjamin Coal Company
Date of Accident: June 17, 1986

David Butler, Surface Mine Inspector Hawk Run District Office

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On June 17, 1986 at approximately 2:25 p.m., Donald L. Hutton, Sr., Mine Foreman with twenty-four years mining experience, approximately seventeen years as a foreman for Benjamin Coal Co., Decatur Twp., Clearfield County was fatally injured. Nature of injury was caused by multiple skull fractures.

Victim went to the maintenance area to warn the people of a blast that was to be set off. The blast went off and victim was hit by fly rock.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

The probable cause of the fly rock is gathered from a post-blast site inspection and examination of the shot record was determined to be faulty geology of the blast site which caused the bore holes in the northwest corner of the blast pattern to release their energy and overburden away from the intended direction of cast.

Factors also thought to be contributing to the accident were:

1. The topography and haulroad placement were such as to deceive the blaster and the employees in respect to the actual distance from the blast.
2. The maintenance area was thought to be a "safe area" because previous shots had never ejected debris into this area.
3. The shot was designed to go the other way.
4. Protective cover was available in the maintenance area.
5. Questionable judgment was shown in victim remaining in his truck.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Operator directed to conduct blasting in such a manner to prevent debris from being ejected into the air which might cause a hazard or danger to persons or property.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim:	Charles F. Wilson - Electrocution
Address:	Rices Landing, PA 15357
Name of Mine:	Clyde Mine No. 3, Greene Co.
Name of Company:	BCNR Mining Corp.
Date of Accident:	June 30, 1986
Wayne Reynolds, Mine Inspector	6th Bituminous District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

Unavailable at time of publication of annual. Still under investigation.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim: Robert Kimmel
Address: R.D. 4, Pine Grove, PA 17963
Name of Mine: No. 1½ Vein Slope-Lincoln Area-Schuylkill Co.
Name of Company: Ash Coal Company
Date of Accident: July 8, 1986

Paul L. Hummel, Mine Inspector 6th Anthracite District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On July 8, 1986, approximately 1:15 p.m., Robert Kimmel, age 32 with twelve years mining experience and two years experience at the occupation of Superintendent/Mine Foreman was fatally injured. Nature of injuries was traumatic asphyxiation, external compression.

Prior to the time of the accident, a cut of coal was blasted from the face of the slant, also a skip of coal was taken from the inby rib of the slant. This blasting dislodged two timbers. Upon returning to the working face, the victim did not replace the dislodged timbers or install any additional support timber in the accident area. The victim was approximately 18' out under unsupported roof when he proceeded to wash coal down the pitch to the loading area, when the victim was struck by a slab of roof (top rock), measuring approximately 12' wide x 8' long x 2' in thickness, pinning him to the bottom rock from the shoulder area to the feet, crushing him and causing traumatic asphyxiation.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

Victim traveled under unsupported roof for a distance of approximately 18' when a slab of top rock measuring 12 x 8 x 2 fell and crushed him. This action by the victim was in direct violation of the approved roof control plan.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Operator to follow roof control plans which were approved by the Department. Make more frequent tests for bad roof and keep timbers as close to working face as possible. Also, when poor roof conditions exist, cut down on the width of entires, and install temporary roof supports until room is made to install permanent timbers. Install dislodged timbers. No persons to work or travel under unsupported roof except for the purpose of installing temporary supports.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim: Charles G. Smith
Address: R.D. 6, Box 310, Somerset, PA 15501
Name of Mine: Leon Strip - Alice, PA
Mt. Pleasant Twp., Westmoreland Co.
Name of Company: Purco Coal Inc.
Date of Accident: October 8, 1986

Robert J. Musser
Surface Mine Conservation Inspector Greensburg District Office

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On October 8, 1986, at approximately 3:50 p.m., Charles G. Smith, Laborer, age 53 with twelve years mining experience, five and a half at this mine was fatally injured. Nature of injury was blunt force and asphyxiation.

The victim was standing beside the Michigan 275B Front End Loader which was cleaning rock and dirt from the edge of the coal on the low wall side. He was watching for the edge of the coal seam for the equipment operator when a section of spoil slid off the low wall, first pinning him then covering him.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

The low wall is very steep due to the method of mining with a dragline being used to remove overburden. It is composed of unconsolidated rock and dirt from the previous cut. Heavy rains occurred in this area on the week and week-end prior to the accident. The spoil material was very wet which weakened the integrity of the wall and made it unstable.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

The low wall should be sloped to a greater angle of repose and particular care should be taken to identify any weak points in the wall prior to working directly below it, especially when it is made unstable by heavy rains.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS ACCIDENT

Purco Coal Company, front end loader operator, and the laborer. Measurements of the low wall slope by federal MSHS investigators were approximately 30° from vertide which is the angle stated on the ground control plan for this site. A more thorough inspection of the low wall by the site foreman and the employes in the pit area may have identified this unstable area, although it can not be said for certain after the fact.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim: John J. California - Roof Fall
Address: Vandergrift, PA 15690
Name of Mine: Emily No. 1 - Plumcreek Twp., Armstrong Co.
Name of Company: Keystone Coal Mining Corp., (Subsidiary of
R & P Coal Co.)
Date of Accident: November 5, 1986

Daniel J. Smicik, Mine Inspector 10th Bituminous District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

Unavailable at time of publication of annual. Still under investigation.