

# **FATAL ACCIDENTS**

## REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim: Demerit Detchon  
Address: P.O. Box 87, 6th St., Berthulz, Ohio  
Name of Mine: Putt Strip, Surface Mine Permit No.  
63840106, BAM 3287, Washington County  
Name of Company: Robinson Coal Company  
Date of Accident: March 16, 1988

Robert Emmert  
Surface Mine Conservation Inspector Greensburg District Office

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On March 16, 1988, at approximately 10:50 a.m., Demerit Detchon, age 60, auger operator with twenty-five years experience at this occupation, was fatally injured. Nature of injury was blunt forces, victim was crushed.

The accident occurred at the Robinson Coal Company on the Putt Strip, Permit No. 63840106, BAM 3287, Robinson Township, Washington County.

Apparently the victim was augering on the fourth hole and had begun rotation when the auger ceased. This would indicate that a large amount of pressure had been applied to the head. It had been normal practice for the crew to stop work and retreat from the highwall, until the cause could be determined. In this case, the victim worked the carriage up and down and moved it back and forth in an attempt to free the head. When it did pull free, the highwall slid out, resulting in the fatality.

### CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

It appears that the sudden slide of part of the highwall could have been the result of augering in an area that had been previously deep mined. Bench above highwall appeared to be safe.

### MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Department should consider not issuing auger permits on previously deep mined areas on the Pittsburgh Seam.

### RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS ACCIDENT

Based on testimony from workers the victim and auger crew were following proper safety procedures.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim:	John Kuperavage
Address:	110 Cooper Dr., Port Carbon, PA 17965
Name of Mine:	Tuscarora Preparation Plant - Schuylkill Co.
Name of Company:	Tuscarora Coal Company
Date of Accident:	October 3, 1988
Paul L. Hummel	4th Anthracite District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On October 3, 1988, at approximately 10:45 a.m., John Kuperavage, age 27, Breaker Foreman was fatally injured. Mr. Kuperavage died at 12:00 noon.

The accident occurred at the Tuscarora Coal Company at the Preparation Plant in Schuylkill County. The victim was cleaning chute.

Still under investigation and all other information unavailable at time of publication of annual.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT

Name of Victim:	James Gorchick
Address:	514 East Crawford St., Ebensburg, PA 15931
Name of Mine:	Bethlehem No. 33- Cambria County
Name of Company:	BethEnergy Mines, Inc.
Date of Accident:	November 3, 1988
Frank Pohopin, Mine Inspector	11th Bituminous District

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On November 3, 1988, at approximately 8:00 a.m., James Gorchick, Mine Examiner, age 36 was fatally injured.

The accident occurred at the BethEnergy Mines, Inc., Bethlehem Mine No. 33, Cambria County. The accident occurred in the north section of the mine. In his position as Mine Examiner, Mr. Gorchick was making a mine examiner examination and cleaning up rock as he went along. He ran into the tail of the Joy Loader with his jeep.

Still under investigation and all other information unavailable at time of publication of annual.