

1997
ANNUAL REPORT ON MINING ACTIVITIES
IN THE
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Prepared by



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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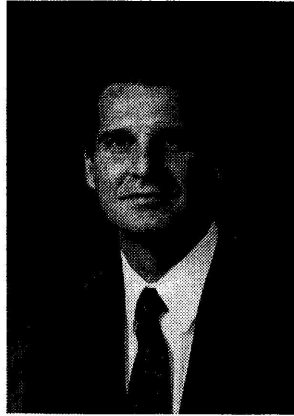
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A MESSAGE FROM MINERAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT DEPUTY SECRETARY ROBERT C. DOLENCE

The accomplishments of Pennsylvania's mining industry in 1997 are represented in this 128th consecutive edition of Pennsylvania's Annual Report on Mining Activities. The mining industry along with labor, environmental advocacy groups and DEP worked diligently to realize positive trends in 1997—more land reclaimed through re-mining, response to compliance assistance efforts and fewer lives lost and an increase in production.

Overall coal and industrial mineral production increased by over nine million tons due in part to the strong state and national economy and more efficient mining in the bituminous region. This year was the fourth consecutive annual increase for bituminous production, marking a thirteen year high in 1997. More importantly, this was accomplished with fewer miners losing their lives while on the job in 1997 than in 1996.



One life lost is one too many. However, mining is becoming safer as labor and industry work with DEP's Bureau of Deep Mine Safety to prevent mining accidents through training and studying trend analyses. Bureau Director Richard E. Stickler, new to DEP in 1997, reorganized the bureau to work with labor and industry to solve tough health and safety issues. Mine operators also had fewer violations because of favorable responses to DEP's compliance assistance efforts.

Pennsylvania proved its leadership in technological and environmental achievements in 1997. DEP approved the first diesel-powered equipment for use in Pennsylvania underground bituminous mines. Currently, two mines are using diesel equipment in Southwest Pennsylvania.

Extensive re-mining by the active mining industry in 1997 began the clean up of more land and water polluted from abandoned mines than any other Pennsylvania reclamation initiative. Re-mining and the resulting reclamation, encouraged by state-developed incentives, is accomplished at no cost to taxpayers and is giving the coal industry new production opportunities. In fact, mining in Pennsylvania is going beyond pollution prevention to land and water restoration and pollution reduction.

The success of the mining industry in 1997 reflects Pennsylvania's commitment to miner safety, environmental excellence and the health of the industry. Through continued partnerships with DEP and others who share similar safety and environmental goals, the industry should continue to prosper well into the next century.

For more information about DEP's mining program, please visit DEP's website at <http://www.dep.state.pa.us> (choose Information by Subject/Mining and Mineral Resources).

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