Department of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Mine Safety
Emergency Response Program

Joseph Sbaffoni
Director; Bureau Mine Safety

May, 26  2010
Pennsylvania has 37 active underground bituminous coal mines, approx. 9-10 anthracite mines, and 12 Industrial Mineral mines.

- **Bituminous mines, western region of Pennsylvania**
  - Coal seam relatively flat with average cover of 300 feet.

- **Anthracite mines, eastern region of Pennsylvania**
  - Coal seam from 15 degree to almost 90 degree pitch

- **Industrial Mineral mines (non-coal), throughout Pennsylvania**
  - Average mine height and width is 30 feet
• The Bureau of Mine Safety is responsible for the health and safety of miners in all underground mines throughout the Commonwealth.

• In order to accomplish this objective, the Bureau engages in the following primary services:

  - **Mine Inspection**
  - **Plan Approvals**
  - **Equipment Approvals**
  - **Certifications**
  - **Training of Miners**
  - **Accident Investigation**
  - **Emergency Response**
Mission Statement

The Bureau of Mine Safety's mission is:

• to reduce the possibility of accidents and eliminate fatalities in the underground mines and commercial operations

• to protect the property connected therewith and to provide for the health and safety of the general public

• to respond to accidents and emergencies when called upon
The Bureau maintains a MOU with the Federal Mine Safety & Health Administration to assist in mine inspection, accident investigation and emergency response.

The Bureau also offers support to neighboring states when emergencies arise including the services of the Special Medical Response Team (SMRT).
Emergency Notification

- Emergency toll-free number
  ☢️ (1-800-451-2050)

rega Note: The mine operator requesting assistance can also directly contact Bureau personnel listed on the Emergency Notification list located at each mine.
Response

• The Bureau of Mine Safety will provide for the rapid deployment of mine rescue equipment and personnel in the event of mine-related emergencies throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

• In this effort, the Bureau will provide for the safety of all rescue workers and do everything humanly possible to save trapped or injured miners.
Mine Rescue Stations

- The Bureau of Mine Safety staffs and maintains mine rescue stations geographically located within the anthracite, bituminous, and industrial minerals mining regions to facilitate the rapid response to mine emergencies.
Current Status

• 4 mine rescue stations are located in Fayette, Cambria, Indiana and Schuylkill Counties.
  - Coal mines require a 1 hour ground travel response time (2006 New MINER Act)
  - Industrial minerals mines are still under the 2 hour ground travel time.
  - There are 7 Emergency Response & Training Specialists located at the four rescue stations.
  - 12 State-trained mine rescue teams are maintained throughout the Commonwealth
In order to adequately respond to mine-related emergencies, the Bureau maintains the following equipment at each mine rescue station:

- **Emergency Response Vehicle.**
- **84 Self-contained oxygen breathing apparatus and appropriate testing equipment.**
- **A portable supply of pressurized oxygen.**
- **Carbon dioxide absorbent chemicals as applicable to the supplied breathing apparatus.**
- **Extra oxygen bottles for each breathing apparatus.**
- **Masterline oxygen pumps for filling SCBA cylinders.**
- **Permissible cap lamps and charging racks.**
- **Infrared gas detecting devices for explosive gases, oxygen deficiency, and carbon monoxide.**
- **Other equipment includes thermal imaging devices, programmable underground rated walkie-talkies, and the latest in portable mine rescue communications.**
- **Necessary spare parts and tools for repairing the breathing apparatus and communication system.**
Timeline/Milestones

April 2010 - Mine rescue vehicles upgraded at all stations

Oct. 2009 – Pa State teams competing & training @ the MTTC training center/MERDs-Mine rescue skills

May 2009 – New Marion Center rescue station dedicated (4 stations-12 teams)

Feb. 2009 – Mine Rescue Regs in full effect

Jan. 2009 – New Pa Mining Law takes effect

July 2008 – New Pa Mining Law signed by Gov. Rendell

May 2008 – New Mine Rescue Program initiated

2006 – New MINER act signed

1980 – Pa State Mine Rescue Program initiate (3 stations-8 teams)
October 4, 2007

It is the policy of the Commonwealth to treat the families of miners who are trapped, injured or awaiting rescue during a mine emergency with the dignity and respect they deserve and to make sure families are provided updated information on rescue efforts before the public or the media and that their needs and questions are attended to during the mine emergency.

Part of Emergency Response Plan
Pre-Planning & Training a Must

• Evacuation drills

• Mine specific table top exercises

• MERD’s-
  - Utilizing responsible persons/key mine officials/command center operations/in addition to mine rescue teams

• Regular hands on training and role playing
In the event of a mine emergency

• First priority! ESCAPE, if at all possible
• Know your escapeways
• Activate your SCSR at the first sign of contaminant
• Be aware of SCSR Cache locations
• Use mine communication system to reaffirm your location and route of travel out of mine
If escape route is blocked

• assess the feasibility of seeking a refuge alternative