

State of West Virginia
Office of Miners' Health, Safety & Training
14 Commerce Drive Suite 101
Westover, WV 26501

May 30th, 2008

Fatal Power Haulage Accident
(Underground Coal Mine)

Wolf Run Coal Company
Sentinel Mine
Permit No. U-1583D

Region One

Alan Lander	Inspector At Large
John Meadows	Assistant Inspector At Large
Bill Tankersley	District Inspector
Doug Fansler	District Inspector
John Scott	Electrical Inspector

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GENERAL INFORMATION

A fatal powered haulage related accident occurred at approximately 2:37 P.M. on May 30th, 2008 at the Wolf Run Mining Company, Sentinel Mine. The accident occurred in the No.5 entry roadway at survey spad station No.642. A Fairchild scoop was being used to place crushed stone in the holes (ruts) in the roadway. Mr. Adam Lanham, an apprentice underground coal miner, was fatally injured when he was run over by the Fairchild scoop.

Mr. Barry Elliot, Mine Superintendent and Mr. Johnny Stemple, Regional Safety Manager, notified Mr. Doug Fansler, District Mine Inspector with the WV Office of Miners' Health, Safety & Training, who was at the mine when the accident occurred. A verbal control order was issued to control the accident scene until an investigation was completed. A joint investigation with the Mine Safety and Health Administration and Mine Management was started immediately.

DESCRIPTION

The Wolf Run Mining Company's, Sentinel Mine is a shaft and slope mine. It produces coal from the Clarion Seam and is located near Philippi, in Barbour County, West Virginia. Mining is conducted with four continuous miner sections. Employees and supplies are transported by rubber tired diesel and battery powered equipment. Coal is transported from the mine via conveyor belt and sent to the preparation plant.

On Friday, May 30th, 2008, the day shift road maintenance crew, under the direction of Mr. John Jackson, foreman, entered the mine at approximately 6:00 a.m. The crew consisted of Mr. John Jackson, foreman; Mr. Robert Fitchet, grader operator; and Mr. Adam Lanham (victim), apprentice miner (an employee of Mine Temp, LLC). Upon entering the mine, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Lanham changed the batteries on the Fairchild scoop located on the mine bottom. Mr. Jackson then loaded the scoop bucket with crushed stone from the crushed stone bin. They started into the mine, with Mr. Jackson operating the scoop and Mr. Lanham walking behind. After hearing Mr. Delbert Weaver, shift foreman, call for clearance into the mine, Mr. Jackson asked Mr. Weaver over the radio if he would give Mr. Lanham a ride to their work area near spad station no. 793. Mr. Fitchet had already taken the grader to that area to begin maintenance activity.

As work progressed during the shift, Mr. Lanham would stay with Mr. Fitchet, while Mr. Jackson would travel back and forth to the crushed stone bin to get more crushed stone. The distance from the crushed stone bin to the road maintenance area was approximately eight tenths of a mile. Upon completion of the fifth trip, Mr. Jackson asked Mr. Lanham to follow him back to the bottom area to help change out the scoop battery. After replacing the battery, Mr. Jackson loaded the scoop bucket and they proceeded back into the mine. Mr. Lanham was walking behind the scoop.

At the number 14 block near spad station no. 661, they met Mr. Fitchet and the road grader. Mr. Lanham was standing at the inby end of the scoop as the grader approached. Mr. Fitchet said there was still time to repair a hole in the travel way at the number 12 block. Mr. Lanham walked to the other end of the scoop. Mr. Jackson started tramping the scoop in the outby direction with the battery end first. Mr. Lanham was walking in front of the scoop. Mr. Jackson stated that he turned his head to look back at the road grader when he heard it start. The scoop was still tramping in the outby direction in proximity to the number 13 block, Mr. Jackson then turned his head to look in the direction of travel. It was then that he noticed Mr. Lanham was missing. He stopped the scoop and yelled for Mr. Lanham. Mr. Jackson exited the scoop's cab and walked around to the other side and found Mr. Lanham lying face up under the mid section of the scoop, opposite the operator's compartment. Mr. Fitchet arrived and asked what had happened; and Mr. Jackson replied that he had run over Adam (Lanham). Mr. Lanham was lying on his back with his hardhat and safety glasses still on. His cap light was not burning.

Mr. Fitchet told Mr. Jackson that he detected a pulse on Mr. Lanham. Mr. Jackson used his hand held two-way radio to call Mr. Delbert Weaver, shift foreman, for help.

Mr. Tim McGee, section foreman/EMT, Alan Nestor, electrician, Kevin Hobb, supply man, and Greg Maxwell, shuttle car operator, responded with first aid supplies and administered CPR. Mr. Lanham was treated and transported to the mine bottom by mantrip. Barbour County EMS and Health Net personnel were waiting on the surface to administer care. At 3:25 p.m., Mr. Lanham was pronounced dead by Dr. Dixon after telephone/radio communications with Mr. Ron Dotson, flight nurse, from Health Net. He was then transported to Broaddus Hospital, in Philippi, by the Barbour County EMS.

FINDINGS OF FACT

- 1) The victim was struck and run over by a Fairchild battery powered scoop, Model #35C WH, Serial #T339-336. The company number assigned to this scoop is 9336.
- 2) The victim was struck by the battery end of the scoop at #13 block in the number 5 entry, spad no. 642.
- 3) The scoop bucket was loaded with gravel which was being utilized to maintain the haulage road.
- 4) Mr. John Jackson was the foreman in charge of Mr. Lanham.
- 5) The average height in the area is 7.5 feet. There were no visible obstructions in this area.
- 6) Clearance under the battery end of the scoop ranged from 12 to 16 inches. Clearance under the center section ranged from 8 to 12 inches.
- 7) Mr. Lanham was assigned the task of assisting Mr. Fitchet, grader operator and Mr. Jackson, Scoop operator/supervisor, to roll out typar and spread gravel along the roadway.
- 8) Mr. Lanham had been issued an apprentice miner's card on April 4, 2008.
- 9) Mr. Lanham had received his mine training on April 28, 2008.
- 10) Mr. Lanham had 33 days experience before the accident.
- 11) Mr. Jackson stated that Mr. Lanham was walking in front of the scoop at the time of the accident.
- 12) With the scoop tramming outby, and upon hearing the grader start, Mr. Jackson turned to look backwards toward the grader.
- 13) When turning to face forward, Mr. Jackson noticed Mr. Lanham was no where in sight.
- 14) Mr. Lanham was found lying on his back, with his hard hat and safety glasses on; and his cap light was not burning.
- 15) Mr. Lanham was found lying beneath the center pivot section of the scoop, in side of the tires.
- 16) Mr. Lanham was an employee of Mine Temp, LLC (Permit No. C-6393).
- 17) Mine Temp, LLC provides various personnel for the different mining companies in the area.
- 18) Mr. Lanham had been assigned as an apprentice miner to the Wolf Run Coal Company, Sentinel Mine.
- 19) Mr. Jackson had received his annual refresher training on February 23, 2008.

- 20) Mr. Jackson had received new task training on operating a Fairchild scoop on March 12, 2008.
- 21) Inspection of the Fairchild scoop revealed three non-contributory type violations.
- 22) The only apparent damage to Mr. Lanham's safety equipment was a slight crack in the case of the Ocen M-20 self rescuer. Mr. Lanham's mine belt and cap light were not available on the mine property for examination during the investigation.
- 23) It was revealed during the formal interviews that Mr. Lanham was having problems staying awake during the shift.

CONCLUSION

While traveling to the number 12 block, in the number 5 entry, Mr. Adam Lanham was fatally injured when he was run over by a battery powered scoop. The victim was in close proximity to the moving scoop.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Mine management shall submit to the West Virginia Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training a modification to their Comprehensive Mine Safety Program to address the safe operating procedures for off track mining equipment. (See Appendix)

Mine Management shall hold safety meetings with all mine personnel to discuss the safe operation of off track mining equipment to prevent a recurrence of the accident.

ENFORCEMENT

The following enforcement action was taken as a result of the investigation.

A non-assessed control order was issued in accordance with West Virginia Administrative Regulation Title 36, Series 19, Section 7.1

An Imminent Danger Order was issued for the practice of supervision. Based on the investigation of a fatal accident that occurred along the main haulage road at 13 block, along the No.4 belt, at spad number 642, it was revealed that Mr. Adam Lanham (an apprentice miner) was run over by a battery powered scoop (operated by a foreman). The scoop was being operated in a manner that did not assure that Mr. Lanham was a safe distance from the scoop's path of travel. The practice of a foreman or experienced miner operating mining equipment, while having charge of an apprentice miner, does not ensure that the apprentice is effectively supervised with regard to safety practices, nor is instructed in safe mining practices.

Two violations were issued that directly contributed to the cause of the accident:

Title 36, Series 30, Section 4.3: “Based on the investigation of a fatal accident that occurred along the main haulage road at 13 block along the No.4 belt at spad number 642, it was revealed that Mr. Adam Lanham was run over by a battery powered scoop that was being operated in a manner that did not assure his being a safe distance away from and out of the scoop’s path of travel”.

22A-2-12: “Based on the investigation of a fatal accident that occurred along the main haulage road at 13 block along the No.4 belt, at spad number 642, it was revealed that Mr. Adam Lanham was run over by a battery powered scoop and was not being effectively supervised with regard to safety practices around equipment.

The West Virginia Office of Miners’ Health, Safety and Training issued four violations that did not contribute directly to the accident.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The West Virginia Office of Miners’ Health, Safety and Training gratefully acknowledges the cooperation of the employees and management of Wolf Run Coal Company and the Mine Safety and Health Administration during this investigation.

Bill Tankersley, District Mine Inspector

Date

Doug Fansler, District Mine Inspector

Date

John Scott, Electrical Inspector

Date

John Meadows, Asst. Inspector-at-Large

Date

Alan Lander, Inspector-at-Large

Date

APPENDIX

- * List of persons providing information or present during the investigation
- * Mine Information
- * Victim Information
- * Modification – Comprehensive Mine Safety Program

INVESTIGATION / INTERVIEWS

An onsite investigation was conducted on May 30th, 2008 of the accident site #5 entry, spad station #642, along the #4 belt conveyor.

WV Office of Miners' Health, Safety & Training

John Meadows	Assistant Inspector at Large
Bill Tankersley	District Inspector
Doug Fansler	District Inspector
John Scott	Electrical Inspector
Terry Farley	Administrator

Mine Safety & Health Administration

Tom Todd	Assistant District Manager
Joe Facello	Supervisor
Frank Thomas II	Electrical Inspector
Kevin Honeycutt	Inspector

Wolf Run Coal Company

Johnny Stemple	Regional Safety Manager
Brandon Triplett	Safety Tech
Hank Moore	Attorney
*Robert Fitchett	Grader Operator
*Tim McGee	Section Foreman (EMT)

* Denotes persons being interviewed

Mine Temp, LLC

Melvin Triplett	Owner
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The following persons were present during one or more interviews conducted on June 4th, 2008.

WV Office of Miners' Health, Safety & Training

Alan Lander	Inspector at Large
Bill Tankersley	District Inspector
Doug Fansler	District Inspector
Terry Farley	Administrator
Barry Koerber	Attorney

Mine Safety & Health Administration

Joe Facello	Supervisor
Frank Thomas II	Electrical Inspector

Wolf Run Coal Company

Johnny Stemple	Regional Safety Manager
Arthur Wolfson	Jackson & Kelly
R. Henry Moore	Jackson & Kelly
*Robert Fitchet	Grader Operator
*Tim McGee	Section Foreman (EMT)
*Kevin Hebb	Supply Foreman
*Steve Hively	Shift Foreman
*Kermit Melvin	Engineer

* Denotes persons being interviewed

The following persons were present during one or more of the interviews conducted on June 12th, 2008.

WV Miners' Health, Safety & Training

Alan Lander	Inspector at Large
Bill Tankersley	District Inspector
Terry Farley	Administrator
Barry Koerber	Attorney

Mine Safety & Health Administration

Frank Thomas II	Electrical Inspector
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Wolf Run Coal Company

Johnny Stemple	Regional Safety Manager
Tim Martin	Company Safety Manager
R. Henry Moore	Jackson & Kelly
*John Jackson	Scoop Operator
*Kevin Hebb	Supply Foreman
*Robert Fitchet	Grader Operator
*Delbert Weaver	Shift Foreman

*Denotes persons being interviewed

MINE INFORMATION

COMPANY Wolf Run Coal Company

MINE NAME Sentinel Mine WV PERMIT U-1583D

ADDRESS Rt.3 Box 146, Philippi, WV 26416 COUNTY Barbour

DATE PERMIT ISSUED May 12, 2006 WORKING STATUS Active

LOCATION Rt. 76 and Route 250 intersection near Philippi, WV

UNION _____ NON-UNION X

DAILY PRODUCTION 3,202 tons ANNUAL PRODUCTION TO DATE 483,632

TOTAL EMPLOYEES 169 NUMBER OF SHIFTS 3

NAME OF COAL BED Clarion SEAM THICKNESS 7 feet to 9 feet

ACCIDENT INCIDENT RATE 6.89 LOST TIME ACCIDENTS 1

TYPE OF HAULAGE Conveyor Belt

WV OMSHT INSPECTOR Bill Tankersley No.81

DATE OF LAST INSPECTION May 30, 2008

NOTIFIED BY Johnny Stemple, Wolf Run Coal Company

DATE / TIME OF NOTIFICATION May 30th, 2008 at 2:40 p.m.

CMSP - ANNIVERSARY DATE May 4, 2008

CMSP – CONTACT PERSON Johnny Stemple

