

## State of West Virginia Joe Manchin III, Governor

WV Office of Miners' Health, Safety & Training Ronald L. Wooten, Director

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TO:

All West Virginia Coal Operators

FROM:

Ronald L. Wooten, Director

DATE:

October 29, 2007

RE:

Mine Fatalities

As you may or may not know another fatality occurred last night, (Sunday, October 28<sup>th</sup>) in a West Virginia coal mine. This is the sixth fatality recorded in West Virginia coal mines this year. Another death, which occurred earlier this year, will likely also be recorded as a mine fatality.

Each of the incidents referenced above, as well as the last fatality in 2006 occurred on a weekend day. This fact is troubling to me, as I am sure it is to others in the industry. It is imperative that when weekend work is scheduled (production or nonproduction), proper supervisory and safety staffing is provided.

As most of you are aware the West Virginia Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training changed its work schedule earlier in the year to assure that inspections are made on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. Our inspectors cannot be present in all mines all the time, but industry personnel are. I am asking that special attention be directed toward the weekend work environment in an effort to assure that this trend is reversed.

RLW:ks

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