

# News Release



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## **MSHA fines Big River Mining LLC nearly \$300,000** *West Virginia-based Broad Run Mine assessed for repeated violations*

**ARLINGTON, Va.** – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) today announced it has assessed \$291,600 in fines against Big River Mining LLC, owner of the Broad Run Mine in Mason County, W.Va. The violations were issued in February based on coal dust accumulations and the company’s failure to follow an approved ventilation plan for the mine.

“Coal dust accumulations around conveyor belts are an obvious danger that every operator should monitor,” said Richard E. Stickler, acting assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health. “Such conditions must be promptly corrected to prevent potentially catastrophic and deadly results.”

On Feb. 7, an MSHA inspector issued a high negligence unwarrantable failure order to the mine operator for allowing coal and coal dust to accumulate around an energized coal conveyor belt tail roller and bottom belt roller. The accumulations were packed so tight around the turning rollers that the rollers and bearing housings were too hot to touch. This could have led to a mine fire. MSHA had issued this operator three unwarrantable failure orders for violations of the same standard during the previous six months.

On the same day, an MSHA inspector issued a high negligence unwarrantable failure order to the operator for failing to follow the approved ventilation plan. As a result of the ventilation plan violations, miners were observed working in a cloud of silica-bearing dust that was generated by cutting into the sandstone roof. Similar ventilation practices – exceeding the allowable distance from the face to the line curtain, shutting off the scrubber between shuttle cars and making a cut on the side opposite the line curtain – had been observed on this same section the previous month. At that time, MSHA issued a high negligence unwarrantable failure order and reviewed the requirements of the ventilation plan with management.

Broad Run Mine was fined \$147,300 for accumulation of combustible materials and \$144,300 for failure to follow the approved ventilation plan.

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