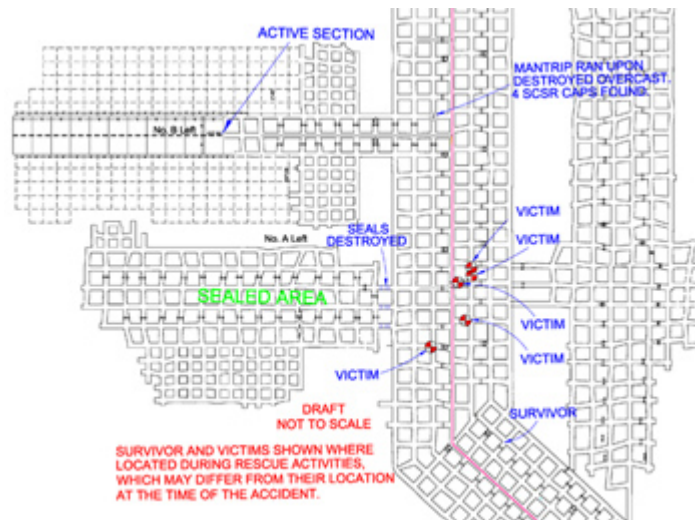




Fatality #27 - #31 - May 20, 2006
Ignition/Explosion of Gas/Dust - Underground - KY
Kentucky Darby LLC - Darby Mine No. 1

COAL MINE FATALITY - On Saturday, May 20, 2006, at about 1:00 a.m., an underground explosion occurred that resulted in the deaths of five miners and injury to one miner. The accident occurred at the start of the maintenance shift. Four of the six miners underground, including the survivor, were located in the active working section at the time of the explosion.



Best Practices

- **Maintain Sufficient Ventilation:** Ample ventilation is the first line of defense against an ignition or explosion.
- **Apply Rock Dust Liberally:** Generous applications of rock dust can prevent the propagation of coal dust explosions.
- **Make Frequent Tests for Methane:** Gas tests should be made more frequently during periods of dropping barometric pressures. Also, gas tests must be made at all locations that could be contacted by flame or sparks immediately before and continuously during any welding, cutting, or soldering activity, which shall not be conducted in air that contains 1.0 percent or more of methane.
- **Maintain Effective Bleeder Systems and Seals:** Monitoring the efficiency of ventilation systems is critical to ensure gases are continuously diluted and carried away from active workings. Examinations should also ensure that seal water traps contain sufficient fluid to maintain effective isolation.
- **Clean Up Loose Coal, Coal Dust and Other Combustible Material:** The possibility of a fire or explosion can be diminished by reducing the fuel supply.

These are the 27th-31st fatalities reported during calendar year 2006 in the coal mining industry. As of this date in 2005, there were five fatalities reported in coal mining. These are the 13th-17th fatalities classified as Ignition/Explosion of Gas/Dust in 2006.