

News Release



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MSHA fines Hiawatha Coal Co. nearly \$342,800 *Miner seriously injured in vehicle rollover accident*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) today announced it has issued penalties totaling \$342,800 to Hiawatha Coal Co. for a powered haulage accident last year at the Bear Canyon Mine in Huntington, Utah. A miner was seriously injured in that accident.

On Oct. 16, 2008, a miner suffered severe head injuries when the personnel carrier he was operating rolled over on a steep grade after the brakes failed. The driver intentionally steered into the mountainside to stop the vehicle. MSHA’s accident investigators discovered that the rear brake linings were worn to metal-on-metal contact and the front braking system leaked brake fluid.

“It is inexcusable that a mine operator would allow such obvious defects to go unaddressed, and the outcome could have been even worse,” said Michael A. Davis, MSHA’s deputy assistant secretary for operations.

MSHA issued unwarrantable failure orders for failure to correct the defects and to equip the personnel carrier with adequate brakes. Additionally, regular moderate negligence citations were issued for failure to post warning signs along the road, to inspect and record defects affecting safety, to maintain control of the vehicle and to operate the vehicle at a safe speed.

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