



U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration

YEARS OF SUCCESS



Safety and Health are Values



United States Department of Labor  
**MSHA**  
Mine Safety and Health Administration

**U.S. Department of Labor**  
**U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao**

**Mine Safety and Health Administration**

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**25 Years of Success**

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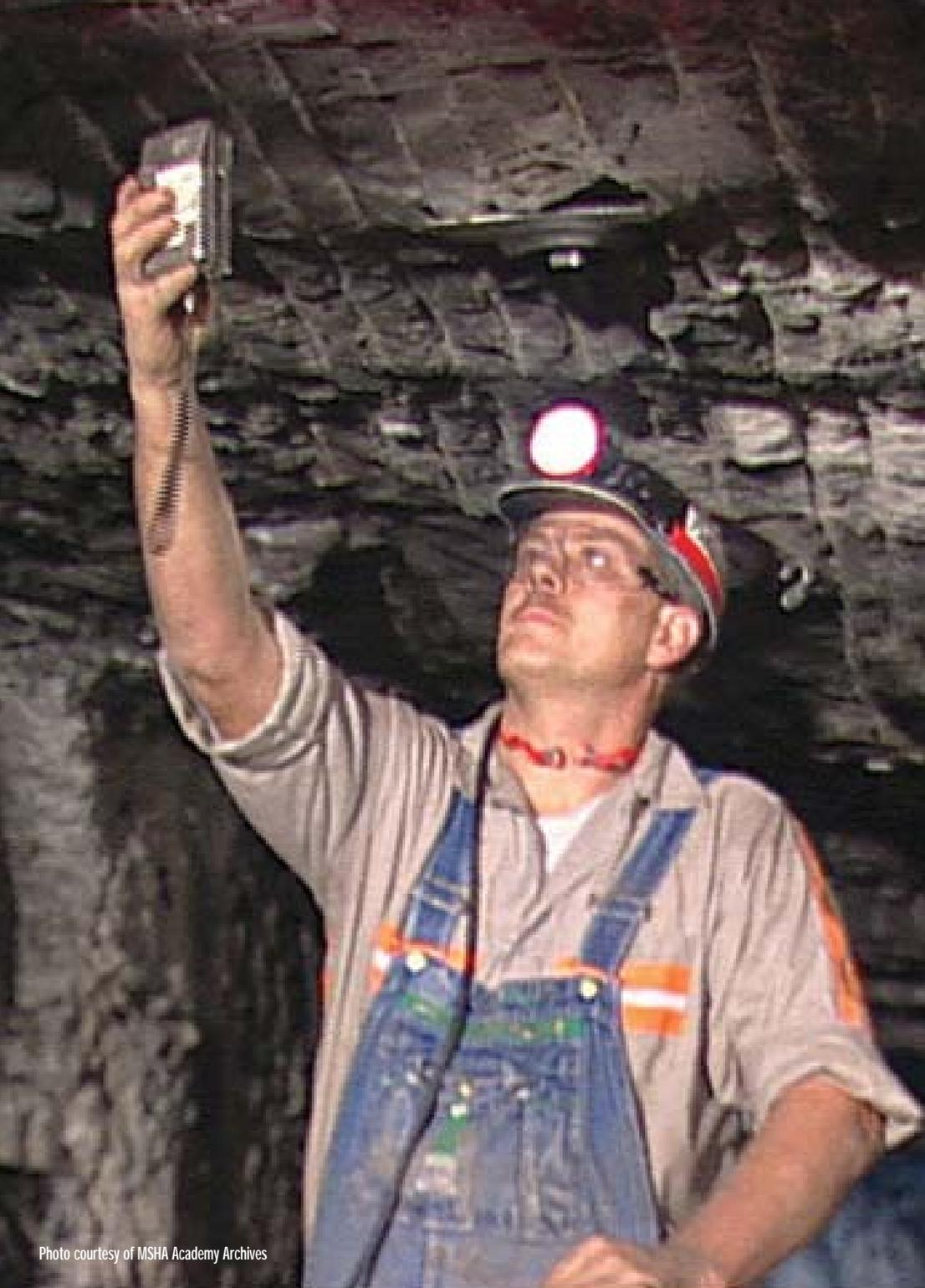
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A Message from  
U.S. Secretary of Labor  
Elaine L. Chao

SECRETARY OF LABOR  
WASHINGTON

Dear Friends:

It is my pleasure to congratulate the men and women of the Mine Safety and Health Administration on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the agency. I join you in saluting the proud history and bright future of MSHA. It is a moment to both look ahead and reflect on MSHA and the industry it so ably serves.

The accomplishments are many. MSHA's story is one of professionalism and commitment to safer and healthier mines beginning with the first days in 1978 to the dramatic rescues at Quecreek. There are many heroes in the collective experience of MSHA, most of whom quietly dedicate their careers to ensuring a better working environment for miners.

Every day, the people of MSHA are confronted by hazards in the working lives of miners and they do not turn away. Through their efforts, remarkable progress has been made, and recent years were the safest in history for miners in this country. This is an outstanding record that will hopefully continue in the years to come.

In our efforts to eliminate all injury and illness, we will continue to rely on these dedicated public servants to share their skills, be there for that sudden call to help, and fulfill the mission of improving safety and health for America's miners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elaine L. Chao". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Elaine L. Chao

U.S. Department of Labor

Mine Safety and Health Administration  
1100 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, Virginia 22209-3939

Dear Friends:

Congratulations to the men and women of MSHA on 25 years of achievement for America's miners. It is my privilege to lead this outstanding organization at such a momentous time, and it has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career. Since joining the team here in 2001, I truly understand the commitment and professionalism of MSHA's people and their vital contribution to ensuring health and safety in the mines.

This publication tells MSHA's story since its creation in 1978 – a time in which a revolution took place in America's mines. With rapid advances in technology and stronger health and safety standards, the industry has experienced changes that no one could have imagined. Breakthroughs in mine safety and health have yielded better understanding of how miners actually work, the skills they need, and ways to make their work safer and healthier. For the third straight year, the U.S. mining industry set its best safety record since statistics were first kept in 1910. This momentum must continue as miners, employers and government join hands in response to the workplace as it is and prepare for the one ahead. I believe this kind of collaboration will be a key catalyst as we move forward with confidence to build a more rewarding workplace for America's miners.

In the years to come, I am confident that MSHA will be an even better resource for all stakeholders in the mining industry to find real world solutions to the challenges faced in the mines every day. The dynamic environment of mining requires our utmost attention to identify the potential hazards that may be present, but together I know we can control those hazards and make further progress toward reaching the goal we all share: To bring every miner home to their loved ones safe and healthy at the end of every shift.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be a part of this great story of success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave D. Lauriski".

Dave D. Lauriski



A Message from  
Assistant Secretary  
Dave D. Lauriski

Looking Back, Looking Ahead:

# The MSHA Record of ACHIEVEMENT 1978 - Today

Present at the Creation  
It is 1977, and safety and health standards have improved dramatically for more than 500,000 workers in America's mining industry since the earliest days of extracting minerals from the earth.

It was a long journey to reach this point. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, hundreds of thousands

of miners and other underground workers were victims of countless fatal accidents. In 1907, 362 miners were killed in one horrific coal mine explosion alone in West Virginia. More than 3,000 miners died that year, the largest total ever recorded in a single year. Annual mining fatality totals numbering in the thousands were not uncommon during the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Soon, there were changes for the better. A combination of tougher mining laws and increased awareness of improved safety and health in mining among government, labor and industry reduced those annual totals over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to 322 deaths in 1976. This was great progress, but far too many deadly accidents continued to plague the nation's mines.



Photo courtesy of Michael Carpenter

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# MSHA Mission

To eliminate fatal mining accidents and to reduce the frequency and severity of non-fatal accidents; to minimize health hazards; and to promote the improved safety and health conditions in the Nation's mines by administering the provisions of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977.

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Accordingly, the U.S. Congress went to work in 1977 crafting legislation to address the safety problems still prevalent in the mining industry. On March 9, 1978, the legislation created a new federal agency to oversee mine safety and health in America, the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA). As stated in the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977, "The first priority and concern of all in the coal or metal and nonmetal mining industry must be the health and safety of its most precious resource—the miner."

The Act combined existing federal legislation for coal and metal and nonmetal mines into a single law. While the laws on the books had been enacted to improve working conditions for miners, the new law eliminated weaknesses in prior legislation. For instance, under the Federal Metal and Nonmetallic Mine Safety Act of 1966, enforcement sanctions were insufficient to encourage compliance. Neither the Coal Act nor the Metal Act could quickly address health hazards. Lawmakers were concerned that the procedures to promulgate safety and health standards under the older laws were too slow to keep pace with the advances taking place in the mining industry.

Finally, the Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 moved the agency monitoring mine

safety and health from the Department of Interior to the Department of Labor and gave MSHA its name.

**Building on the Past**  
The hazards of mining and the need to improve safety and health for miners had long been a matter of federal law. As early as 1865, Congress created a federal mining bureau. However, little was done until a series of mine disasters occurred which spurred public demand for government action to stop the loss of life.

In 1910, Congress established the Bureau of Mines in the Department of Interior and charged it with investigating mining methods and practices related to safety and accident prevention. This Act, however, had some significant limitations. Most significantly, it denied "any right of authority in connection with the inspection or supervision of mines....on the part of any Bureau of Mines employee." It would take many more years and many more deaths before federal mine safety personnel had the authority to set mine safety and health standards, inspect mining operations for compliance, and issue civil citations for violations.

In 1952, Congress passed the Federal Coal Mine Safety Act, providing for annual inspections of underground coal mines and

setting mandatory safety standards for gassy mines. But mining accidents, particularly those claiming multiple victims, continued to occur with alarming frequency. In 1963, a federal task force was established to investigate mine safety and recommend improvements.

Amendments in 1966 required coal mines employing 14 or fewer miners to comply with mine safety law. But the 1966 Amendments only addressed a small portion of the causes of accidents occurring in the mines. Most were still beyond the reach of the federal statute and left to the inconsistencies of state laws and the advisory nature of the Bureau of Mines Coal Mine Safety Code. Clearly, stronger legal remedies were needed. In 1966, the Federal Metal and Nonmetallic Mine Safety Act also became law, partially responding to task force recommendations.

**Strengthening the Law**  
Congress responded with the strongest mine safety legislation in the nation's history: the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969, legislation widely considered one of the most effective occupational safety statutes ever enacted. "(The Congressional committee) determined early in its consideration that the Nation can no longer accept the fatalistic attitude

which permeates this industry that 'coal mining is a hazardous occupation and we cannot change this fact.' Men's lives are at stake and those of their families who are dependent on them. Despite the hazardous nature of this occupation, the committee is convinced that these hazards can be substantially reduced or eliminated. Many are due to bad practices and a failure to act vigorously to change them."

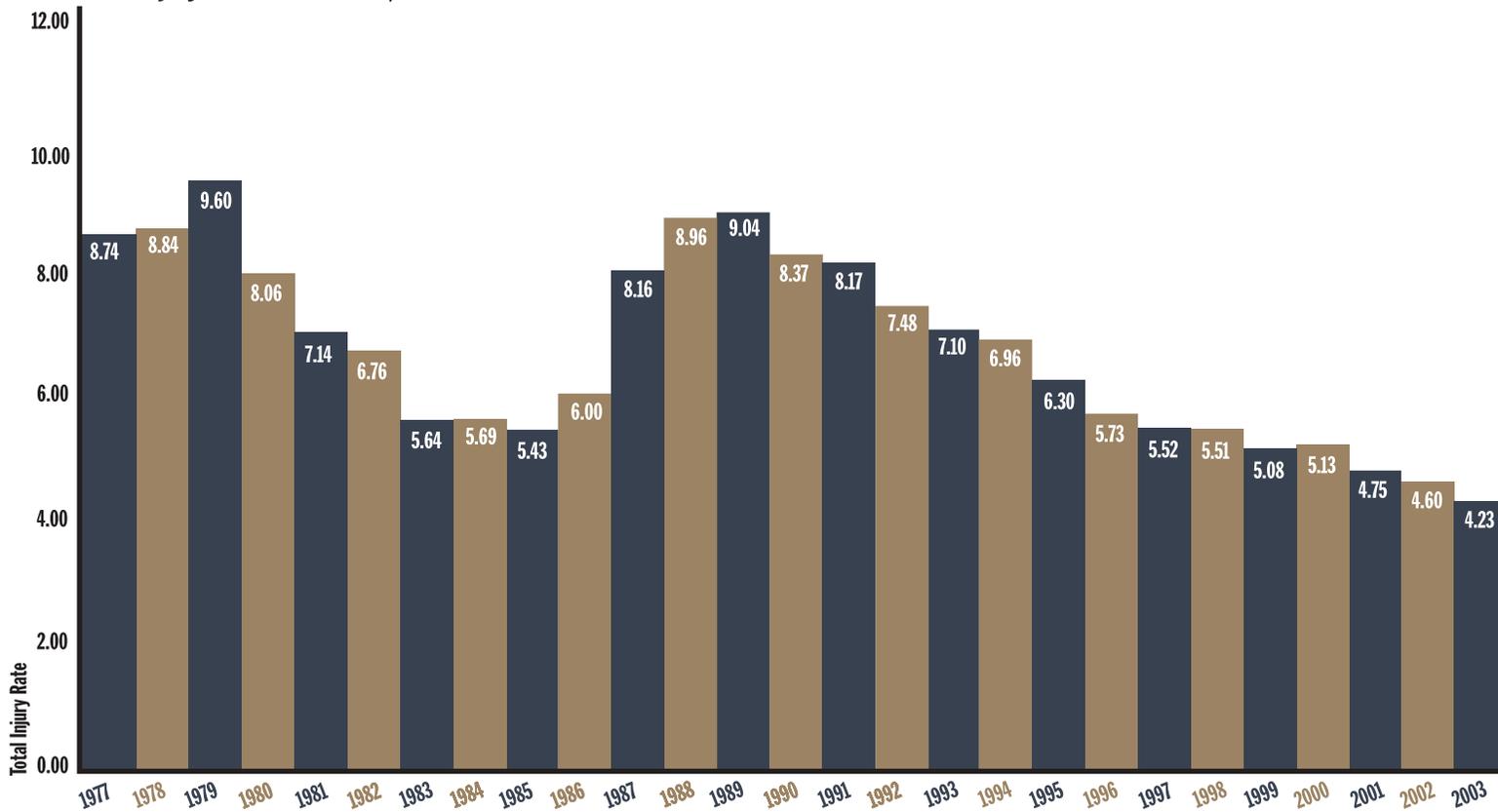
Congress further noted that there was "an urgent need to provide more effective means and measures for improving the working conditions and practices at the Nation's coal mines in order to prevent death and serious physical harm, and in order to prevent occupational diseases originating in such mines." Such conditions were serious impediments "to the future growth of the coal mining industry" and "could not be tolerated."

To live up to these words, the Act for the first time established binding safety and health standards for the U.S. coal mining industry and required all operators and miners to comply. Inspection of all underground coal mines would now take place quarterly, along with new assistance to states in enforcing effective coal mine health and safety programs.

# MSHA • T I M E L I N E



**Total Injury Rate at All Mines, CY 1977 - 2003**

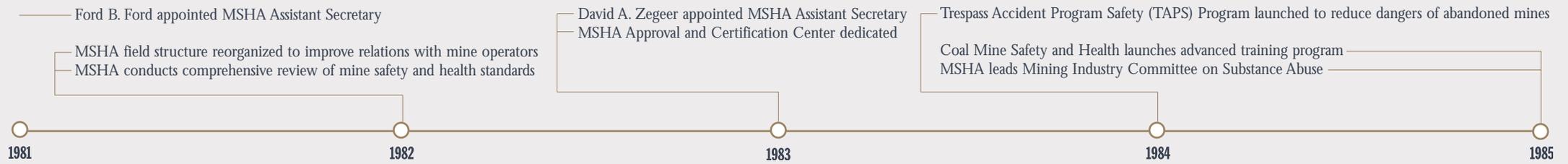


Source: MSHA

For the first time, the law protected whistleblowers who reported unsafe conditions and allowed miners' representatives to accompany federal inspectors during inspections. It also established a compensation program for miners suffering from "black lung" disease and provided for sampling of coal mine dust to enforce vigorous new dust standards.

Implementing the new law was no easy task, but progress was steady. As the U.S. Bureau of Mines annual report to Congress in 1972 noted: "The hesitation, confusion, and occasional defiance that marked the coal industry's first two years under the (Mine) Act began to diminish. Despite the obvious difficulties inherent in altering traditional ways of operating, the industry in 1972 undertook to adapt itself more fully to the numerous and complex provisions of the law. Most coal mines, small and large alike, installed new equipment and modified mining practices and machinery to achieve compliance with health and safety standards set forth under the law."

Despite these steps forward, the nation's miners still experienced too many deaths and injuries on the job. In the early 1970s, one miner was killed and 66 others were injured in the mines every day. Once again, Congress reacted. In 1976, a congressional



review of enforcement of the 1966 Metal Act and the 1969 Coal Act found that fatalities and injuries in the mines were “still unacceptably and unconscionably high.”

**MSHA is Launched**  
 In 1977, a new law was enacted to improve safety in America’s mines. Under the terms of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977, the Mine Safety and Health Administration was created at the U.S. Department of Labor on March 9, 1978, to administer a broad regulatory program to reduce injuries, illness and fatalities in mining.

Shortly after MSHA began operating, the first Assistant Secretary of Labor for Mine Safety and Health Robert B. Lagather said: “Our goal is a common sense one: to reduce fatalities and injuries in the mines, not to create unnecessary burdens or costs for mine operators . . . The 1977 Mine Act is one of the most important pieces of safety and health legislation ever enacted by the Congress . . . The Act is being implemented and enforced in a fair and reasonable manner consistent with its purpose, that is to protect miners’ lives. We will work with industry to minimize



Source: Michael Carpenter

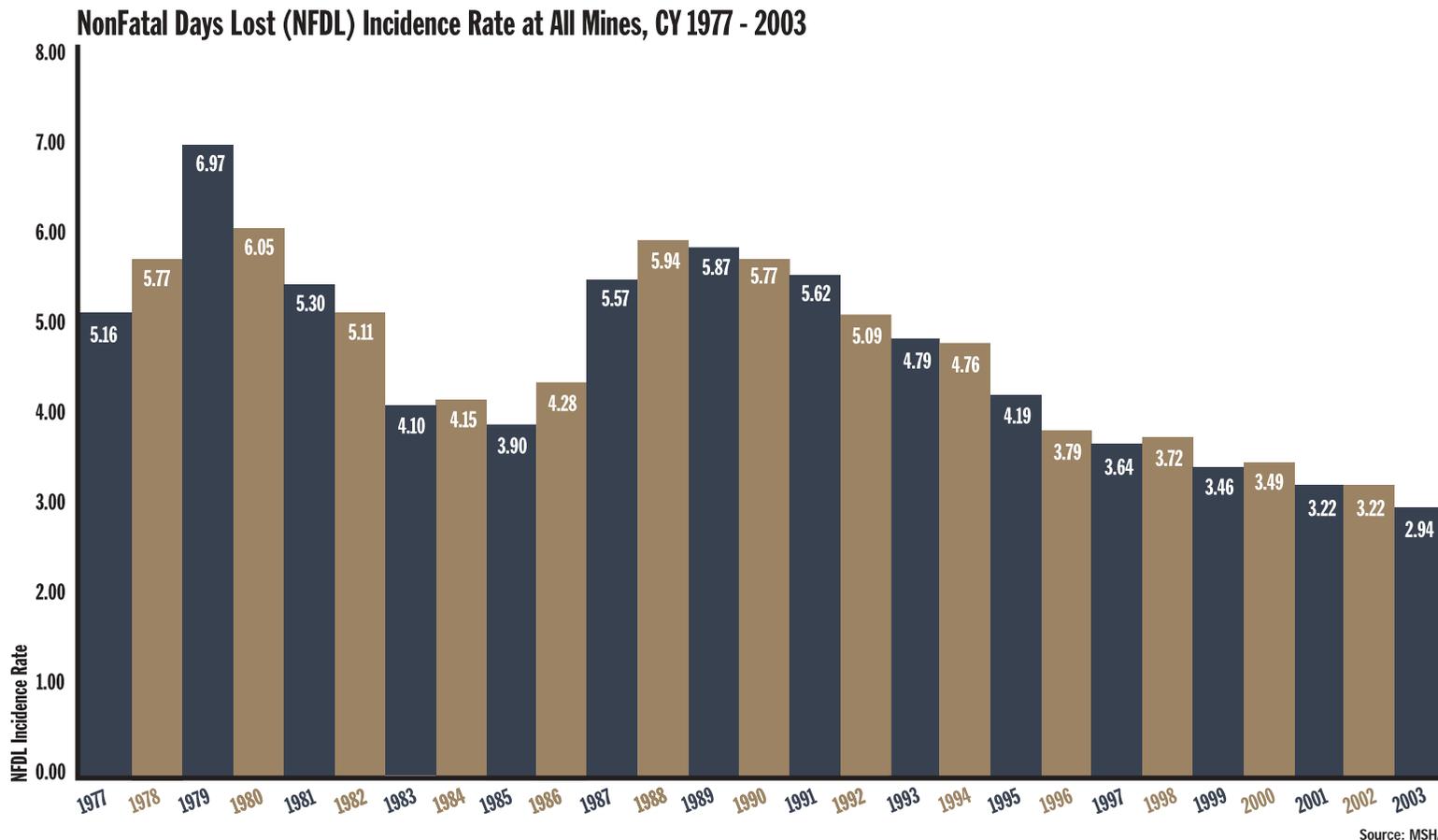


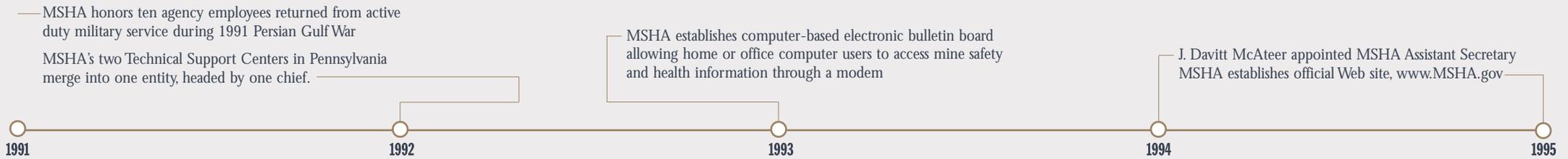
the cost of this protection but, the protection accorded to miners in this law should not be diminished.”

And so MSHA has. With offices in 38 states around the country, enforcement of safety and health rules and other responsibilities has never been higher. MSHA conducts four inspections every year of all underground coal mines and metal and nonmetal mines nationwide, along with two inspections of all surface mining operations each year. The law also gave MSHA new enforcement tools to ensure that dangerous conditions or practices are corrected. Agency inspectors can now issue citations for violations of health or safety standards, with civil penalties as high as \$60,000 per violation.

The Act provides criminal sanctions against mine operators who willfully violate safety and health standards. MSHA investigates alleged willful violations and may turn findings over to the Justice Department for prosecution. The new law retains the right of inspectors to issue closure orders under special circumstances, including when they find an imminent danger.

The Act also prohibits discrimination against miners, their representatives, or job applicants for exercising their safety and health rights.





Miners voicing concerns over safety and health on the job are protected from retribution. MSHA investigates all complaints of discrimination. If evidence is found, the Labor Department can take the case before the independent Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission. In most cases, miners fired for expressing safety concerns can get their job back temporarily while a discrimination complaint is adjudicated.

The 1977 Mine Act increased the focus on protecting the health of miners in both coal and metal and nonmetal mining. It expanded the responsibilities of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) in what is now the Department of Health and Human Services and charged that agency with developing criteria for mine health standards.

The agency continued efforts to reduce “black lung” among coal miners. Other priorities included development of mine rescue team regulations for underground mines and regulations requiring safety and health training for both surface and underground miners. The agency also developed regulations identifying independent contractors who could be considered mine “operators” under the 1977 Act. Many

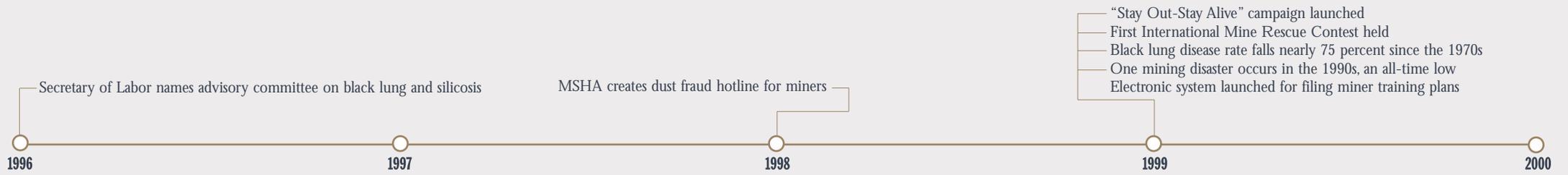
former advisory standards for metal and nonmetal mines were converted to mandatory safety standards.

Under the Act, MSHA offers programs to promote enhanced mine safety and health throughout the mining industry. For example, the agency conducts a national mine rescue contest for coal mining in odd-numbered years and for metal and nonmetal mining in even-numbered years. These events call on mine rescue teams from around the nation to compete in exercises simulating a mine emergency. The contests are a proven way to sharpen the skills of mine rescue teams that may have to rescue real-life miners during a real emergency.

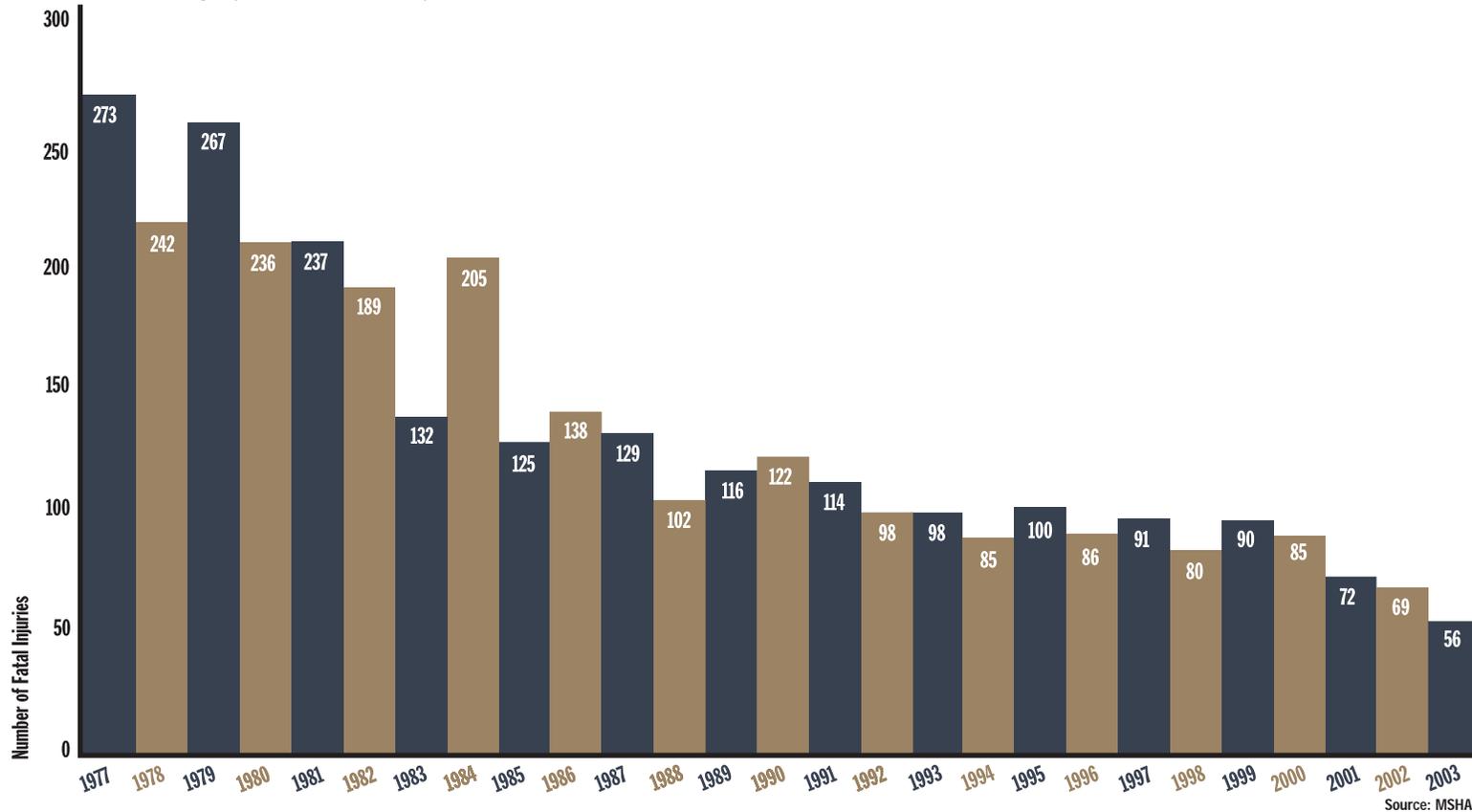
MSHA, in cooperation with the National Mining Association, also administers a program honoring safe mining operations in the United States. *The Sentinels of Safety* award is given to the mining operation achieving the most consecutive hours worked without a lost-time injury. *The Sentinels of Safety* awards program actually began in 1923 when Herbert Hoover, then Secretary of Commerce with jurisdiction over the Bureau of Mines, called a conference on mine safety. During the conference, a proposal was made to establish a nationwide mine safety competition and

“ Passage of the Mine Act had a major impact on reducing fatalities in the mining industry, but in more recent years that reduction had reached a plateau. The current emphasis on compliance assistance and the integration of education and training, technical support, and enforcement has moved us off that plateau to even lower numbers of fatalities. It has accomplished this with improved working relationships, partnerships, and cooperation between the Agency and the regulated community.”

Jim Petrie, District Manager, Metal and Nonmetal, Northeastern District Office, Warrendale, PA



**Fatal Mining Injuries at All Mines, CY 1977 - 2003**



Hoover, himself a mining engineer, enthusiastically approved it.

MSHA also assists state departments of mines to develop and enforce effective mine health and safety laws and regulations. Funds are given annually to designated agencies in 48 states and the Navajo Nation to promote training of miners.

In recent years, MSHA has focused on abandoned mines and their inherent danger to explorers, hikers, and children at play. Each year, people are hurt or killed while exploring abandoned mine sites. MSHA warns children about the dangers of these sites and warns them to "Stay Out-Stay Alive!"

**A Record of Achievement**  
It all adds up to a proud record of achievement, and the key is collaboration with the industry and its workers. Throughout these first 25 years, MSHA has worked with the American mining community to join in cooperative programs addressing safety and health problems. While MSHA enforces the Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 firmly and fairly, the agency also emphasizes the education and training of miners and mine managers in mine safety and health requirements, as well as engineering initiatives, to reduce injuries. Throughout



the history of the agency, MSHA has consistently believed that enforcement alone cannot solve all mine safety and health problems.

During confirmation hearings in 1981, MSHA's second assistant secretary, Ford B. Ford, put it this way:

*While enforcement of mining regulations is an important tool, it is by no means the only or even necessarily the overriding tool. Safety awareness and knowledge of inherent dangers in mining and their avoidance can and must be uniformly achieved in all mining activities ... This requires a commitment by labor and management to cooperate with each other to that end. MSHA will provide its experience and assistance in achieving such effective cooperation.*

MSHA is proud of the impact the agency has on safety and health in America's mines. In 1978, there were 242 victims of fatal mining accidents in the United States. In 2003, fatalities dropped to the lowest level in recorded history as 56 miners lost their lives in mining industry accidents. Mining injuries, too, have fallen dramatically. In 1978, there were 5.81 lost-time injuries per 200,000 employee hours. By 2003, this rate had declined by 49 percent

to 2.95 lost-time injuries per 200,000 hours.

The frequency of mining disasters has also declined. During the 1970s, there were 12 mine disasters. In the 1980s, there were 9 mine disasters. In the 1990s, only one accident, which claimed the lives of eight miners, was classified as a disaster. In addition, it is estimated that cases of black lung disease among miners, though difficult for the agency to track, fell nearly 75 percent since the 1970s. Though the task is not complete, clearly dramatic progress has been made.

**Looking Ahead**  
This record speaks for itself, but the men and women of MSHA understand that even one fatality is one too many. MSHA's mission will not be complete until every miner goes home safe and healthy after every shift. So the effort to reach this goal goes on every day at the Mine Safety and Health Administration, and will continue until zero tolerance yields the zero illness, accident and injury record we are all working for.



Assistant Secretary Dave D. Lauriski, MSHA, left, and Governor of Pennsylvania, Mark S. Schweiker, right, head the stretcher pulling team at the Que Creek recovery  
Photo courtesy of MSHA Academy Archives

For more information about current MSHA programs and activities, please visit the agency's website at [www.msha.gov](http://www.msha.gov).

# Creating a culture of Prevention

In 2004, the Mine Safety and Health Administration has good news for America: Fatalities in the mining industry fell to the lowest level ever recorded since the government began collecting data in 1910. Clearly, more miners are returning home to their families at the end of every shift than ever before.

This milestone is only one of several showing record-setting improvements in health and safety achieved through an innovative effort to reduce accidents by:

- Targeting enforcement to those who fail to recognize the value of health and safety;
- Investing in compliance assistance tools to help employers protect workers; and
- Establishing partnerships with businesses, unions, trade associations and professional organizations to spread the message that safety and health adds value.

Traditional enforcement methods remain a cornerstone. At the same time, the agency expanded its compliance assistance program so that mine operators can get answers to questions and guidance on making operations safer.

The record shows that MSHA is on the right track, but further reduction of injuries and



Photo courtesy of MSHA Academy Archives

fatalities requires a new emphasis on hazards that have not been fully addressed and on behavioral aspects of accident prevention. For example, small mines employing five or fewer workers historically experience a fatality rate significantly higher than larger mines. In 2003, MSHA's small mine office assisted nearly 1,700 small mines with training, education and compliance assistance. In coming years, MSHA expects this effort to help more small mines implement safety and health programs that better protect their workers.

MSHA is also placing new emphasis on communication with its key stakeholders. Special initiatives include:

- **National Coal Mine Safety Awareness Day.** MSHA sent over 600 enforcement, training and technical support personnel to 1,500 active coal mines to speak directly with miners;
- **Spring Thaw Workshops.** For metal and nonmetal mines, the workshops are designed to increase awareness of mine safety hazards before the start of the high-production season;
- **National Webcasts.** With hundreds of stakeholders online, MSHA analyzes fatalities for cause and prevention, and discusses best practices;
- **Hispanic Outreach.** Portions of MSHA's Web site and many publications are available in Spanish. MSHA also has bilingual

## TAKING PREVENTION TO THE NEXT STEP: THE TRIANGLE OF SUCCESS

**M**SHA's "Triangle of Success" is a balanced approach to mine safety and health, emphasizing enforcement, education and training, and technical assistance. Each element is equally important.

### Enforcement Sets the Pace

MSHA fulfills its basic enforcement mandates through mine inspections and accident investigations, but an inspector's job today is not simply to identify violations, but to listen to miners' concerns, talk with management, and ultimately identify root causes of mine safety and health violations. Above all, mine inspectors resist playing a game of "gotcha," but instead strive to help the mining community improve their own safety and health efforts.

To enhance this effort, MSHA released guidelines used to set civil penalties for violations. This is a matter of basic fairness and transparency, letting people know the rules to which they are subject. Most penalties are set according to a published formula, but until recently "special assessments" outside the formula were set under guidelines held within MSHA. Those guidelines are now posted on the MSHA Web site and available to all.

### Education and Training: The Heart of Compliance Assistance

Training in the mining industry is crucial to the success of any program to reduce accidents and illnesses, and MSHA has responded in a variety of ways, including provision of user-friendly training materials for mine operators and miners, and mine-site training where safe practices for specific problems are demonstrated. MSHA's education and training specialists regu-

larly offer specialized training when system deficiencies are detected at specific mines.

MSHA has also inaugurated a compliance assistance plan detailing steps for better educational outreach to mine operators and miners. Compliance assistance means different things to different people. In the broadest sense, it identifies concepts and accident prevention activities such as education and training, accident and violation analysis, hazard identification, root cause analysis, technical support, and access to information. Access to information means the information is readable, easily understood, and written in plain language. The key words here are "user-friendly."

MSHA's Web site, [www.msha.gov](http://www.msha.gov), provides access to a multitude of resources for compliance assistance, including a list of the 20 standards most often cited by major commodity and mining type, along with "best practices" information on each. Miners and mine operators can also find safety tips, accident investigation reports, hazard alerts and bulletins, and "single source" pages which give the user access to all documents and resources related to a particular standard, especially new ones. MSHA's Data Retrieval System is also available online, providing access to mine overviews, accident and violation records, dust sampling results, and employment/production data.

### Breakthroughs in Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is the third side of the Triangle of Success, and a key component of a balanced accident prevention strategy. MSHA continuously expands its partnerships with industry and labor to identify new technologies that address mine hazards.

In that regard, MSHA has two primary centers for engineering support and technical assistance. The first is the Pittsburgh Safety and Health Technology Center, whose divisions include mine electrical systems, mine emergency operations, mine waste and geo-technical engineering, physical and toxic agents, roof control and ventilation. The center responds to requests for assistance on safety and health problems at mines throughout the country, as well as foreign countries if there is need for expertise in a particular field of mine-related work.

The internationally recognized Approval and Certification Center in Triadelphia, West Virginia certifies mining products for use in underground coal and gassy underground metal mines. Experts evaluate and test equipment, instruments and materials for compliance with federal regulations. These products range from small electronic devices to large mining systems. Once evaluation and testing is successfully completed, a license is issued authorizing a manufacturer to produce and distribute products for use in mines. The Center also assists in accident investigations when an explosion, fire, injury or fatality involves approved equipment. MSHA's team provides technical assistance to individual mines and groups of mines, with particular safety and health concerns, and plays a key role in technical innovation.



employees and offers mine-site sessions in Spanish;

- **Holiday Safety Initiative.** MSHA's Assistant Secretary wrote weekly to every mine operator during December 2003 to emphasize winter hazards and the need to stay alert and focused. The results were historic: Not one fatal injury occurred in the coal mining industry that month.

Communication with the industry has also been enhanced through special alliance agreements with trade associations, labor unions, and other stakeholders who recognize the benefits of closer coordination with MSHA to reach health and safety goals. For example:

- The CEOs of the member companies of the National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association adopted MSHA's safety and health performance goals as their own. This is a first for the industry;



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"I visited mines in England, Europe and South America. I am pleased to report that none could compare to mine safety in American mines. Without a doubt, MSHA is the finest mine safety enforcement agency in the world."

James Day, Administrator for Mining Enforcement and Safety Administration (MESA), 1973-1975

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“ In my years with the U.S. Bureau of Mines, the Mining Enforcement and Safety Administration (MESA) and MSHA, I have seen numerous changes in administration and a variety of approaches to miner health and safety. For the first time in my career, the philosophy of the present leadership matches my personal philosophy: Be firm, but use some common sense along the way.”

Jimmy Shumate, Mining Engineer, National Mine Health and Safety Academy

- *The National Safety Council* mobilized its members to protect children from the hazards of abandoned mine sites through the “Stay Out-Stay Alive” partnership;
- *The International Union of Operating Engineers* joined MSHA in emergency response training exercises to bolster our nation’s homeland security.
- *Industrial Mineral Association-North America* signed an alliance agreement partnering with MSHA to foster a culture of prevention at industry operations nationwide.

Further reduction in accidents and fatalities also requires a new emphasis on compliance assistance and promoting growth of a culture of prevention in the industry. The vast majority of mine operators clearly want to do the right thing. Accordingly,

MSHA believes that helping employers comply with laws and regulations is an effective way to reach enforcement goals. While holding the industry to stringent standards, inspectors are engaged not only in an enforcement capacity, but to assist with compliance and identify hazards that lead to violations.

Mining has always been a dangerous occupation. MSHA’s mission now and into the future is to reduce that danger. Even with remarkable improvement in mine safety and health, one death, injury or illness is one too many, and the effort to achieve the highest levels of health and safety for America’s miners will not waver.



MIRACLE AT QUE CREEK

# MINE RESCUE BRINGS OUT THE BEST

## From The Ground Up

It was a nightmare with a happy ending. On July 24, 2002 nine miners were working in the Que Creek Mine in Somerset County, Pennsylvania when they unexpectedly drilled through a wall into a water-filled abandoned mine, unleashing millions of gallons of water. The area of entrapment was approximately 240 feet underground and 1.5 miles from the mine entrance. After being trapped for three days, all were saved in a tense drama that captivated the nation.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) led the rescue effort, using water pumps to stem the flooding, while a small airshaft and two larger escape shafts were drilled. About 24 hours after the breach occurred, rescuers began drilling a 30-inch rescue hole into the mine that would accommodate MSHA's never-before-used rescue capsule. Rescuers soon heard a familiar but distant banging from below, and all nine miners were confirmed alive. With the aid of MSHA's rescue capsule, they were hoisted to the surface one by one, cold, wet, tired and hungry, but for the most part unharmed. It was an emotional moment, and a demonstration of American technology and know-how at its best.

For more than a year, MSHA investigators worked closely with investigators from the

Pennsylvania Bureau of Deep Mine Safety to determine the cause of the accident. "The Que Creek rescue was a tremendous partnership effort by company personnel, the miners themselves, federal, state and local officials and many others. We carried that partnership into the investigation of the accident," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for Mine Safety and Health Dave D. Lauriski. "The purpose of the investigation, along with the other steps we took, was to prevent a recurrence. We must keep this from happening elsewhere. Team members contributed expertise in a range of mine safety specialties in order to assemble a complete picture of what took place."

The investigation determined that the primary cause of the water inundation was the use of an undated and uncertified mine map of the adjacent, water-filled mine that did not show the complete and final mine workings. The root cause was the unavailability of a certified final mine map for the adjacent abandoned mine in the State of Pennsylvania's mine map repository.

Acting on that information, MSHA launched a national initiative to identify old mines, review mine maps, and explore technological innovations, regulations and prac-

# DID YOU KNOW?

Every American uses an average 47,000 pounds of newly mined materials each year.  
Source: National Mining Association

“ We as an Agency have progressed to the point where we have been able to reduce fatal accidents to record-low levels for the last three years, and virtually eliminate catastrophic types of accidents. As we move into the 21st century, I am proud to have been a part of the last 25 years at MSHA.”

Steve Luzik, Chief, Approval and Certification Center, Triadelphia, WV



Photo courtesy of MSHA Academy Archives

The flooded Que creek Mine

tices to prevent these incidents in the future. The agency has participated in demonstrations of technology with potential to detect mine voids and sponsored two technical symposiums to share information. MSHA awarded \$6 million in grants for technology demonstration projects on this issue, and another \$4 million for mine map digitization programs.

The agency continues to work with the Office of Surface Mining and state mine agencies to build a more effective overall system for archiving and digitizing mine maps and has distributed a public service announcement asking the public to share old mine maps in their possession.

Que Creek presented one of the worst-case scenarios that the mining community works so hard to prevent. The ultimate happy ending proved the value of decades of investment in mine safety techniques. The training of the miners, along with preparedness by the civilian and government rescue teams, achieved a mine rescue that will never be forgotten – and MSHA's response will hopefully ensure that a mine accident like this never happens again.

## MSHA HOTLINE ON CALL

MSHA's 24-hour hotline is available for safety and health complaints at (800) 746-1554.

Recognizing and responding promptly to all safety and health complaints is part of MSHA's 15/50 goals that aim to reduce the number of mining fatalities by 15 percent and the non-fatal days-lost accident incident rate by 50 percent by 2008. Any complaint about a mine safety or health concern is taken seriously. If the complaint provides enough information to identify the mine's location and the hazard of concern, it will be promptly investigated.



Photo courtesy of MSHA Academy Archives

# A Woman's Place is in the Mines

Women mining professionals were rare when an act of Congress created the Mine Safety and Health Administration in the U.S. Department of Labor in 1978. Today a woman with the MSHA logo on her hard hat no longer causes astonishment when she arrives at a mine. “Women have taken their places everywhere on the MSHA team,” says Dave D. Lauriski, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Mine Safety and Health. “In enforcement, education and training, and technical support – all the activities that we undertake with the goal of making safety and health values and sending every miner home safe and healthy at the end of every working day.”



Diane Watson

All of the women who have broken ground in this nontraditional career field have interesting anecdotes to share. The following five individuals represent MSHA women who have held a variety of jobs both in industry and in the federal government. Here are their stories.

**Diane Watson** was drawn to non-traditional jobs like a magnet. From installing solar systems atop houses in Nevada, to shipping weapons and ammunitions to law enforcement agencies throughout California, Watson seemed destined to land in an industry that boasts few women in its ranks.



U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao with MSHA employee Bertha Brewer  
Photo courtesy of MSHA Academy Archives

"MSHA tremendously impacted the everyday life of coal mining families. The Agency has successfully cut accident and injury rates through enforcement, education and training. I have always been proud of the men and women who have made MSHA a great success."

Hugh V. Smith, Treasurer, National Council of Field Labor Locals, AFGE, AFL-CIO

For five years, Watson held a variety of jobs at an open pit gold mine, from haul truck driver to bulldozer operator to loader and grader. "Basically I worked my way through all the equipment," she says. Her work ethic and company smarts were noticed by an MSHA mine inspector, and she was encouraged to apply for a job at MSHA. "That was when I realized how serious MSHA people are about what they do. I wanted to be a part of that," says Watson.

Since 1998, Watson has regularly inspected the nearly 50 metal and nonmetal surface mines in her northern California territory. Watson takes seriously the responsibilities of her job, and the gratification she seeks is simple and heartfelt. "I know that I have the capacity to save lives," she says. "There are days when I talk to the miners and I know they are really listening, and maybe I've convinced them to change the behavior that could get them injured or killed. Those are the days when being a federal mine inspector is really worthwhile."

**Linda Zeiler** wondered how far a double major in environmental sciences and religious studies would take her. For the first two years of her working life, it landed the Pittsburgh native a job at a lab at her alma mater, the University of Virginia. Then an opening at MSHA's Toxic Materials Division drew her



Linda Zeiler

It paid off. In 1982, Zeiler was hired by MSHA's Physical and Toxic Agents Division, where she spent 12 years. As a chemist, Zeiler analyzed gas samples at mine operations throughout the country where underground mine fires were actively burning. She juggled her job with courses at the University of Pittsburgh, where she would eventually earn a Masters Degree in Industrial Hygiene.

In 1995, Zeiler took a technical support job at MSHA headquarters in Arlington, where she headed an advisory committee studying the health effects of dust exposure on miners. That was followed by an assignment drafting a regulation on air quality and respiratory protection. By 2000, she had achieved a new feather in her hard hat – deputy director of Technical Support. "The experience gave me much more exposure

back to her hometown for an interview. Although she didn't get the job, she did go back to school for yet another degree, this time in chemistry.

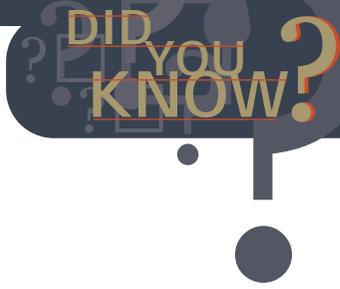
to the safety side of MSHA, whereas my background is primarily in health," says Zeiler. "It was also worthwhile because I helped put together a list of recommendations for the improvement of MSHA's overall impoundment inspection and plan review process."

Certainly there are challenges in upper management, notes Zeiler. "It's all about the big picture – meeting the goals of the Assistant Secretary and assisting the other program areas as best you can." The picture has gotten a bit bigger of late. In August 2002, Zeiler was one of 27 people selected for the Labor Department's Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program. "Achieving SES status requires a well-rounded understanding of all the components of an agency. Again, it's all about the big picture," says Zeiler.



Dani White

**Dani White** was a third-generation worker in the oil fields of Oklahoma, and had the industry boom continued, her career path



might have been quite different. During a two-year stint in the Army, White was the first woman in her unit to work on heavy artillery. When her tour of duty ended, White returned home and spent the next seven years running cranes and building rigs in the oil fields of Oklahoma and west Texas.

By 1980, a shift in the economy led to cut-backs in the oil industry, and White found herself out of a job. Because of her experience running front-end loaders and haulage trucks, she didn't stay unemployed for long. For the next nine years, White worked at a limestone quarry on the Arkansas River operating crushing, loading, drilling and blasting equipment. Eventually, White moved up to superintendent and encountered the usual challenges that face those who manage. "It doesn't matter whether you are male or female, you have to win the confidence of the workers," she says. White's crew earned a number of safety bonuses and developed solid safety programs and initiatives during her tenure. "I was very proud of our safety record, which was a big factor on why I decided to take a job at MSHA," she says. In 1999, White entered MSHA's inspector training program and parlayed the skills she had garnered as a mine superintendent into her new position.

Today, her inspection territory covers 44 metal and nonmetal mines throughout Oklahoma. "I let the miners know how I am. And I ask them to be straightforward with me," she says. "I try not to preach to them about safety, but I relate a lot of my own experiences and near misses and what I could have done to prevent them," she continues. "They ask a lot of questions, so that tells me they're really listening."

In the 1970s, making inroads in a man's world was no easy task, but **Margaret Lally** took it all in stride. The mine safety and health specialist in MSHA's Office of Assessments is a veteran of the coal mining industry of Kentucky, her home state.

In 1972, Lally answered an ad for a key-punch operator at a coal company operating 13 mines in western Kentucky. Lally tackled her new job with energy and enthusiasm, and in no time was reassigned to the lab that analyzed coal prior to ship-



Margaret Lally

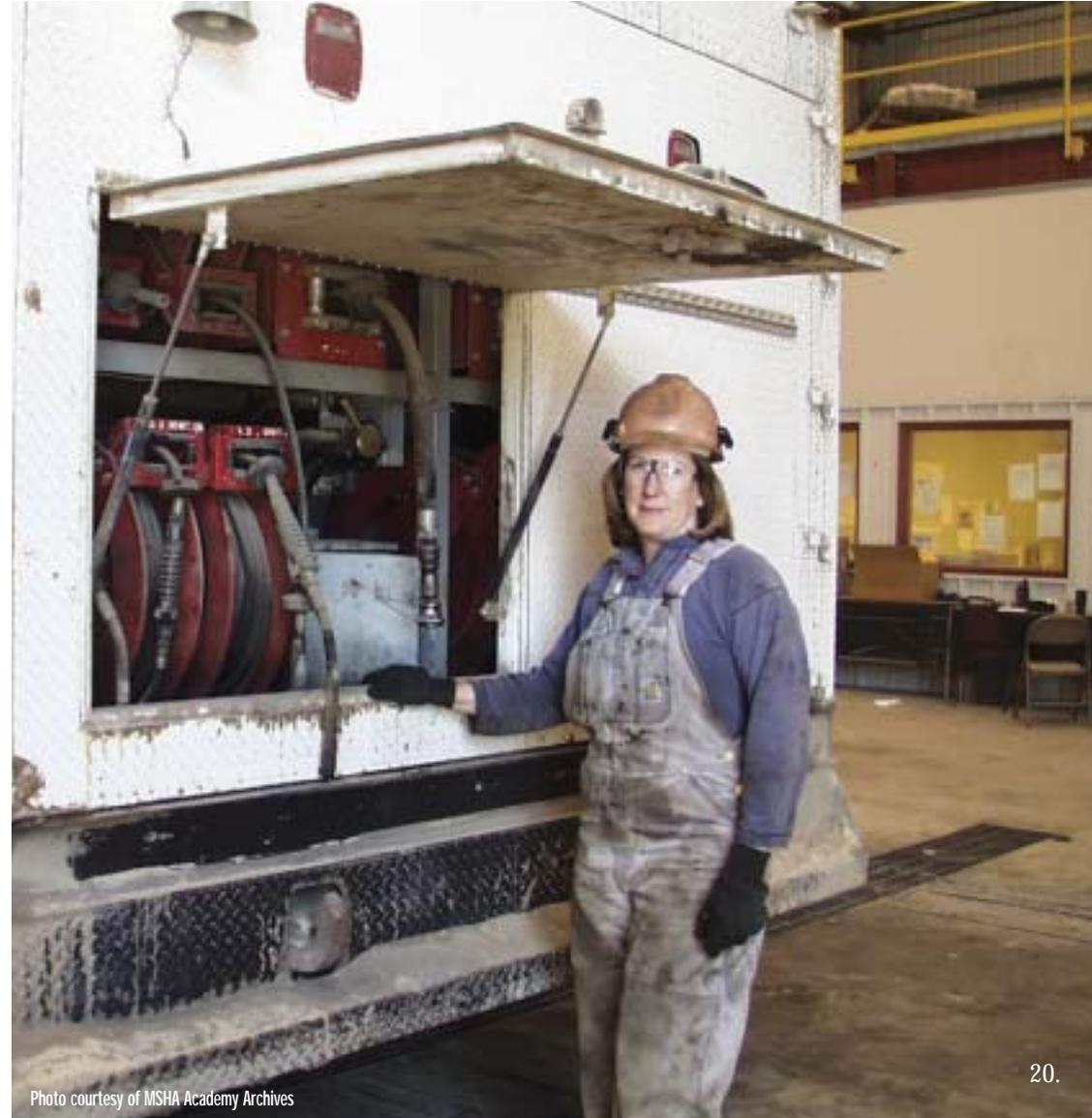


Photo courtesy of MSHA Academy Archives

ment to utility companies. For 10 years, Lally was in charge of sampling at the company's preparation plants, the processing centers where coal is cleaned and readied for distribution. "This was no office job. I was out at one of the plants every single day," she says. Eventually shifting gears, she applied to MSHA in 1992 and began her federal service as a mine inspector. This was something new, but not unwelcome. "I understood what happened after coal came out of the ground and is shipped off to the utility companies," says Lally. "Now I would find out what happens while it's being mined underground."

By 1997, Lally thought an assignment at MSHA headquarters in Arlington would provide her with better opportunities for advancement, so she applied for a job in the Office of Assessments. Here she would review citations for safety and health violations and determine what dollar amount to attach to each one. Lally's field experience has served her well in this position. "Whenever I pick up a fatality report, I can visualize exactly what they are talking about. It certainly helps me in assessing violations," she says.

There were plenty of reasons for **Cheryl McGill** to contemplate a career other than mining, but as she put it, "I was a very



Cheryl McGill

young single mother, I was independent and I was proud, and I needed a job." So in 1975, McGill signed on as a general laborer for an underground coal mine in western Kentucky. Not long after, she transferred into a two-year management trainee program that would enable her to complete an associate's degree and become a first-line supervisor at the mine. "At that point, I learned the distinction between a job and a career, and decided I wanted a career," she says. McGill headed to a coal mine in southern Illinois and began the career path of miner safety and health she continues to pursue. "I was part of long-range planning and management at the mine," she explains. "I interacted with individual miners, developed programs, and got involved in developing and submitting the mine plans required by MSHA." In 1987, McGill was hired as a federal coal mine inspector in MSHA's District 10 office in Madisonville,

Kentucky. "I knew that miner safety and health was an area I wanted to pursue, and I'd always had good working relationships with inspectors," she says. After five years as a mine inspector, McGill transferred in 1992 to Coal Safety in Arlington, where she remained for nine years.

In 2001, McGill reached yet another milestone in her career by becoming the first-ever female to run an MSHA district office. The New Stanton, Pennsylvania office has 109 employees and 250 mines in its jurisdiction. "When I meet new groups for the first time, they are always curious about my background and qualifications," says McGill. "But today I don't even think in terms of not being accepted." The high point of her career occurred in July 2002, when nine Pennsylvania coal miners were successfully rescued from 240 feet underground after being trapped for 77 hours. She has nothing but praise for the dozens of men and women who helped make that moment possible. "We hunkered down, worked non-stop, sparing nothing, and kept our shoulders to the wheel," says McGill. "For the first time we had an incredibly positive outcome and I don't think I'll ever live enough years to outdo that experience."

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"When I started in the mines in 1965, you could hardly see your hand in front of your face underground because the coal dust inside the mine was so thick. Today, you can watch the bits on the continuous miner turning from 50 to 60 feet away."

Carl Boone, District Manager, Coal Mine Safety and Health Division, Madisonville, Kentucky

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# Breaks Through in America's Mines



America's mines have embraced many breakthroughs in technology during the past 25 years. They show up across the industry in better mine safety and health, infrastructure, machines, maintenance, and procedures. Most technology innovation in U.S. mining has focused on re-engineering of machines, facilities and processes to increase miner safety and health, boost production, extend the life of existing operations, and increase recoverable reserves. Innovations range from the simple to the complex, including:

- Reflective materials on miners' clothing and caps reduced the likelihood of accidents by making miners more visible in underground mines;
- Fire detection systems and fire suppression devices reduced the number and severity of fires;
- A jet engine was used to inject inert exhaust gases and extinguish a mine fire; and
- Training using virtual reality and computer-based methods expanded miner awareness of and compliance with higher health and safety standards.

These advances have proven their value in reducing loss of life and improving mine safety and health. It all adds up to a safer and more efficient workplace for America's miners.

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“The single most important development during the last 25 years that had the greatest impact on reducing mine fatalities is the requirement to use canopies on underground face equipment. To date, there have been approximately 300 documented “canopy saves,” situations where a life was saved. In addition, a spin-off of the canopy law created an equally important safety device, the automated temporary roof support system (ATRS). Roof falls, which annually were the leading cause of underground fatal accidents in coal mining, have declined from 66 in 1979 to 3 in 2003.”

Terry Hoch, Chief, Roof Control Division, Technical Support, Pittsburgh Safety and Health Technology Center

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#### New Help For Mine Emergencies

MSHA has supported technology innovations now available to respond to mine emergencies, including:

- **self-contained oxygen-providing escape breathing devices** which help miners survive in an oxygen-deficient atmosphere by supplying oxygen for at least one hour, widening the window of opportunity to find shelter and/or fresh air;
- **electromagnetic voice and coded message communications systems** give surface

personnel more ability to communicate with miners trapped below the surface of the earth without requiring a hard-wire system;

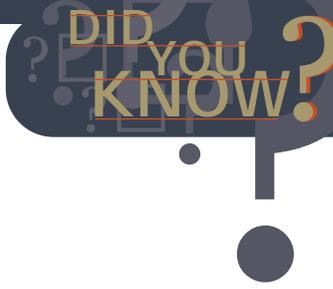
- **seismic location systems** help surface workers locate miners underground through use of geophones, which detect minute vibrations in the earth caused by trapped miners pounding on the roof, rib or floor of the mine; and
- **rapid drill rigs** allow rescuers to probe up to 2,500 feet for trapped miners with a 6- to 8-inch diameter borehole capable

of providing communication and life support, while simultaneously drilling a 28-inch hole suitable for a cable-supported escape capsule. For about three decades now, this technology has been crucial to successful mine rescues.

#### Infrastructure and Equipment Improvements **Underground mining**

Underground miners today often use remote-controlled equipment to recover minerals from seams or ore bodies.

Sophisticated joystick radio controls let miners operate equipment from a safer distance. However, remote control technology does not always mean safer mining because the remote control unit eliminates some safety features of the “old” technology, such as an on-board protective cab structure. MSHA responded by requiring machine operators to adopt new safeguards, including operator placement away from pinch-point and roof-fall areas, and is evaluating use of proximity detectors to deactivate machines when a miner enters specified danger zones.



Nearly two-thirds of today's coal production results from surface rather than underground mining. Source: NMA

Twenty-five years ago, most underground miner fatalities involved roof fall accidents, usually occurring during installment of temporary roof supports such as posts or jacks. Today, automated temporary roof support systems reduce the number of roof fall fatalities since the system is activated from a protected position.

Improvements have also been made in long-wall mining, where operators run cutting machines equipped with rotating drums that shear ore and load it onto a conveyor. Mobile hydraulic jacks now reinforce the roof and move forward, supporting the roof as the ore is removed.

### Surface mining

Technology improvements for surface mines focused on development of new and bigger machines, but these machines raised new safety issues such as reduced visibility. MSHA worked with the industry to develop video camera systems, strobe lights and other visibility devices to help operators see better and avoid smaller vehicles and people.

### Maintenance

As mining machinery got bigger, equipment maintenance became more challenging. To

keep pace, computer-based maintenance systems now detect and report oil pressure, bearing and motor temperature; alert operators to abnormal conditions; dispense lubricants as necessary; and shut down equipment before breakdowns or accidents occur.

### Procedural Advances

New surface mining technology includes the "highwall" mining machine, where an underground machine is adapted for use on the surface. The machine cuts and loads coal by penetrating the coal seam at a highwall and no employees need to go underground. Actual mining is monitored by machine-mounted video cameras and observed by operators in an environmental cab.

### Looking Ahead

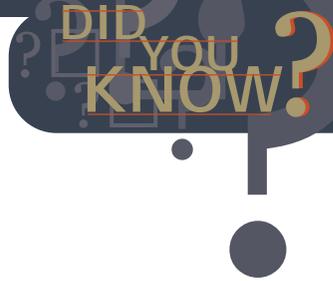
As technology meets the demand for greater safety and efficiency in the mines, MSHA's challenge is to ensure that safety and health is never compromised to enhance mine output. MSHA continues to promote the next generation of technology to achieve better working conditions for the men and women in America's mines. They are the ultimate source of the industry's once and future productivity.



Photo courtesy of Rodney Brown

# Training Day!

THE NATIONAL MINE HEALTH AND SAFETY ACADEMY



Productivity rates have reached an astonishing average of more than 6 tons per coal miner per hour, or 48 tons in a single 8-hour day Source: NMA

One of the premier training facilities for the mining industry and the largest educational institution devoted solely to safety and health in mining is MSHA's National Mine Health and Safety Academy in Beckley, West Virginia. The Academy serves as the central training facility for federal mine inspectors and mine safety professionals from other government agencies, the mining industry and labor. Since the academy opened in 1976, half a million people have taken advantage of its courses on safety and inspection procedures, accident prevention, investigations, industrial hygiene, mine emergency procedures, technology, management techniques, and other topics.

Besides providing classroom instruction, the academy staff produces videotapes, films, publications, and a wide variety of technical materials. A simulated mine and laboratories provide more practical experience.

The Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969 specified that there was "an urgent need to provide more effective means and measures for improving the working conditions and practices at the Nation's coal mines in order to prevent death and serious physical harm, and in order to prevent occupational diseases originating in such mines."

According to the 1969 Mine Act, "The purpose of this Act is to establish health and safety standards; to require that all mine operators and miners comply with these standards; to assist the States in developing and enforcing effective coal mine health and safety programs; and to expand ... research and development and *training programs aimed at preventing coal mine accidents and occupationally caused diseases in the mining industry.*

It was that last statement of purpose which laid the groundwork for the construction of the National Mine Health and Safety Academy.

For more than a quarter-century since its beginning in rented facilities in a small city in the heart of West Virginia's mining country, the mission of the National Mine Health and Safety Academy has been to improve health and safety conditions in the mining industry through education and training. The Academy accomplishes that mission by serving as the central training facility for federal mine inspectors and safety professionals throughout the mining community.

The Academy provides classroom and hands-on instruction as well as the development and distribution of training materials in a variety of formats.



Mine rescue team competition  
Photo courtesy of MSHA Academy Archives



Photo courtesy of MSHA Academy Archives

Students receive their training in traditional and electronic classrooms, specialized laboratories, a mine simulation laboratory, and a physical fitness facility. Additional parts of the Academy include a residence hall and cafeteria. A separate structure was later added that includes the Mine Simulation Laboratory, where mining conditions can be simulated for mine rescue training, among other training activities.

Headed by a manager of National Mine Academy Operations, the Academy today employs a staff of about 66 employees and delivers training to entry-level mine inspectors, experienced inspectors, technical specialists, supervisory and administrative personnel, industry, labor, and educational institutions, and international mining groups. This training is presented by Academy staff or by visiting instructors who are experts in their field. The classes are small, emphasize hands-on learning, and require that students be able to demonstrate and apply what they have learned.

The Technical Information Center and Library at the Academy has evolved into a world-class collection of mining safety and health literature and audiovisual products. Library stock has expanded dramatically over the past 25 years. Collections from the former U.S. Bureau of Mines are now included in the library listings. Added to this is the continual updating of available literature on mine safety and health, making the Technical Information Center and Library an ideal location for research.

The Library can now be accessed through MSHA's Web site at [www.msha.gov](http://www.msha.gov), making it available to students and mine safety researchers around the world.

International training also takes place at the Academy. International training agreements have been signed with mine safety agencies and institutions in Peru, Russia, the People's Republic of China, India, and Ukraine. Training has been conducted for



Photo courtesy of MSHA Academy Archives

mine safety professionals from Bulgaria, Poland, China, South Africa, Russia and Peru, among other nations.

Training at the Academy constantly evolves and is updated to meet the changing needs of the mining industry. For example, for nearly two decades, mine operators in the sand and gravel, crushed stone and colloidal phosphate industries were exempted from the MSHA training regulations through a funding clause which prohibited MSHA from enforcing training rules at those sites. This exemption affected the training of thousands of miners.

When the exemption was lifted in 2000, new training rules became effective requiring mandatory training for miners in these industries. Academy staff was required to train inspectors in the new regulations, provide materials for the training effort, and help prepare industry and contract instructors to provide the training.

Academy staff developed and distributed various manuals and guides to the industry to help them meet the provisions and requirements of the regulations.

The Academy staff develops print and electronic health and safety courses and training materials for use in the classroom and the field. Many of these materials are available in Spanish. The publications and materials address accident trends, regulatory requirements, inspection procedures, safe work practices, health concerns and other problem areas.

The Academy's audiovisual group is responsible for developing videotapes, slides and graphics used in publications, posters, and other informative visual displays.

In 2003, the Academy distributed more than five million educational documents, videos, publications or other items on miner safety and health to the U.S. mining industry.



Robert B. Lagather



Ford B. Ford



David A. Zegeer



David C. O'Neal



William J. Tattersall



J. Davitt McAteer



Dave D. Lauriski

# LEADERSHIP ROLL CALL

ASSISTANT SECRETARIES FOR MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH 1978 TO TODAY

*The Mine Safety and Health Administration has been well-served by the leadership of the following individuals since its creation in 1978:*

## Carter Administration

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**Robert B. Lagather** 1978 to 1981

## Reagan Administration

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**Ford B. Ford** 1981 to 1983  
**David A. Zegeer** 1983 to 1987  
**David C. O'Neal** 1988 to 1989

## George H.W. Bush Administration

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**David C. O'Neal** 1989  
**William J. Tattersall** 1989 to 1993

## Clinton Administration

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**J. Davitt McAteer** 1994 to 2000

## George W. Bush Administration

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**Dave D. Lauriski** 2001 to Present





Industrial Minerals Association - North America

May 17, 2004

The Honorable David D. Lauriski  
Assistant Secretary of Labor  
for Mine Safety and Health  
Mine Safety and Health Administration  
U.S. Department of Labor  
1100 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22209-3939

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Industrial Minerals Association - North America (IMA-NA) takes pride in congratulating the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) on 25 years on successful implementation of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977.

IMA-NA is equally proud of its Alliance with MSHA to improve mine safety and health in the industrial minerals industry. We attribute the success of our Alliance to the active participation of operator, mixer and MSHA representatives on the Alliance implementation team and to our collective ability to translate commitment into action.

Working together we have enjoyed considerable success in our relationship. We now formally recognize the safety achievements of IMA-NA members and are taking specific steps to reduce occupational injuries and illnesses in the industrial minerals sector. These voluntary efforts, going above and beyond regulatory compliance, reflect the paramount importance both IMA-NA and MSHA place on promoting mine safety and health as well as the virtues of collaboration.

IMA-NA will continue to use its position as the principal trade association representing the industrial minerals industry in North America to improve the industry's safety and health performance. Mr. Secretary, we welcome, and are thankful for, the continued support and partnership of MSHA in this laudable pursuit.

Sincerely,

Mark G. Ellis  
President



Your Safety Is Health Leader for 90 Years

May 11, 2004

Honorable David D. Lauriski  
Assistant Secretary of Labor  
Mine Safety and Health Administration  
1100 Wilson Blvd.  
Suite 2322  
Arlington, VA 22209

Dear Secretary Lauriski:

Congratulations to the Mine Safety and Health Administration on the occasion of its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. MSHA leaders and staff during the Agency's first quarter-century should be proud of the significant contributions MSHA has made to make America's mines safe and healthy workplaces. The National Safety Council is proud to be MSHA's partner in an Alliance to improve the safety and health of mine workers and the mines in which they work.

Through this Alliance we are working with MSHA to develop and share knowledge about mine safety and health issues with the mining industry. We are establishing accurate statistical information about mining and minerals operations. We also are supporting MSHA's Stay-Out-Stay-Alive program, which is an important community safety outreach in which MSHA is saving the lives of children in mining communities.

The people of MSHA are passionate about improving safety, preventing injuries and saving lives. I offer my sincere thanks to the people of MSHA for a job well done.

Sincerely,  
  
Alan C. McMillan

Alan C. McMillan, President and Chief Executive Officer

NATIONAL STONE, SAND & GRAVEL ASSOCIATION



2700 WILSON BLVD. # 2100  
ARLINGTON, VA 22209

April 26, 2004

Ms. Loretta Herrington  
Chief of Staff  
MSHA  
1100 Wilson Blvd, 21<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Arlington, VA 22209

Dear Ms. Herrington:

The National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association (NSSGA) extends its warmest congratulations to MSHA on its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

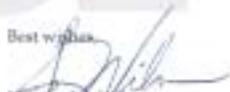
Throughout MSHA's first quarter century, NSSGA has shared with it a common goal of working toward assuring every miner returns home safe and sound at the end of his or her work shift. Over the years, that goal has brought our two organizations to a point where, last year, we joined hands to formalize a relationship for a renewed level of cooperation toward worker safety through an Alliance Agreement.

In becoming the first organization to ally with the agency in this manner, NSSGA anticipated the opportunity for further significant joint accomplishments. We look forward to a future where, together, we will effect positive changes in industry safety culture to the benefit of the aggregate industry worker.

We are equally pleased to witness the evolution of the agency over the years. The heavy list of regulation and enforcement that marked the early years is maturing into a helping hand, offering compliance assistance, training and education to the regulated community as well. As more and more operators become convinced MSHA really is there to help, they will respond with gratitude and cooperation. An agency that offers assistance with sincerity has a bright future ahead of it. And, an industry committed to safety and full compliance is an industry committed to its workforce.

We very much look forward to working with MSHA during its second quarter century and beyond.

Best wishes,

  
Jennifer Joy Wilson  
President and CEO

1805 HING STREET, W. ALFORD, VA, 22429  
813 528-8888 • 800 342 8015 • FAX 813 528 7788  
WWW.NSSGA.ORG



*International Union of Operating Engineers*

1125 SEVENTEENTH STREET NORTHWEST • WASHINGTON, D. C. 20036

• AFFILIATED WITH THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS

• OFFICE OF GENERAL PRESIDENT • (202) 428-9100

April 26, 2004

Loretta Herrington  
Chief of Staff  
MSHA  
1100 Wilson Blvd  
21<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Arlington, VA 22209

Dear Ms. Herrington:

On behalf of the 400,000 members of the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUEO), I extend my congratulations to the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) on its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as an agency.

The IUEO's National Hazard/Hazardous Security Program has been working in partnership with MSHA since 1989 and this has been and still is one of our most beneficial and successful partnerships. MSHA's model for adult education and worker safety and health training became the foundation for IUEO's successful peer training for Hazardous Materials and safety and health.

Based on this history, I was very pleased to be signing a formal Alliance with Assistant Secretary Laurick in January 2004. Once again, as it has been over the last 25 years, MSHA under the leadership of Secretary Chao and Assistant Secretary Laurick is a leader for the protection of working men and women. In addition, MSHA's model for mine rescue and incident command will serve as the foundation for the Hazardous Security initiatives of the IUEO and MSHA Alliance. The Alliance will build on this foundation through education and training, emergency response development, and outreach and communications.

I am confident that through many more years of partnership, the IUEO and MSHA will be leaders in disaster response, whether it be a terrorist incident, natural disaster, or mining/industrial accident.

Again, congratulations on reaching 25 years as not only an Agency but one of the most effective Agencies in this country for worker safety and health.

Sincerely,



Frank Hanley  
General President

Cc:  
The Honorable Elaine Chao  
Assistant Secretary David Laurick

FH:bam

## IN THE LINE OF DUTY

MINE INSPECTORS WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES TO IMPROVE SAFETY FOR OTHERS

**JOSEPH EVANS**, a rescuer for the U.S. Bureau of Mines, died on **April 7, 1911** in a fire at a colliery in Pennsylvania, which killed 72 other miners.

**JOHN FERRELL**, a Bureau of Mines rescue car crewmember, died on January 19, 1912 while exploring an enclosed fire area at a mine in Pennsylvania.

**EDWARD EVANS**, a rescuer for the U.S. Bureau of Mines, was killed in 1913 at a mine in Wyoming.

**L. M. JONES**, a mining engineer for the U.S. Bureau of Mines, died on **October 19, 1916** while conducting rescue operations at a mine in West Virginia.

**JAMES S. CUNNINGHAM**, foreman miner for the U.S. Bureau of Mines, was killed in an accident at an oil company site in Colorado on **August 25, 1919**.

**C.E. SAXON**, principal safety instructor for the U.S. Bureau of Mines, died on **August 19, 1943** from injuries sustained during an explosion at a mine in Alabama.

**WALTER H. MARSH**, a Bureau of Mines coal mine inspector, was killed in a cave-in and rockslide at a mine in Washington State on **July 21, 1945**.

**HENNING MARSTRANDER**, a Bureau of Mines inspector, died in a runaway mine car accident at a coal mine in Alabama on **March 13, 1959**.

**TROY T. WELLS**, a MESA coal mine inspector, was accidentally electrocuted during an inspection of a coal mine in Kentucky on **June 11, 1974**.

**RICHARD M. SAMMONS    KENNETH KISER    GROVER TUSSEY**  
Fifteen miners died in an explosion on **March 9, 1976** at a coal mine in Kentucky, including MESA mine inspectors Kenneth Kiser, Richard M. Sammons and Grover Tussey.

**JON C. COOK**, a MESA inspector, died on **June 1, 1976** in a portabus collision at a mine in West Virginia.

**WILLIS D. ISON**, MSHA Subdistrict Manager, died on **April 4, 1978** while attempting to rescue miners at a coal mine in Virginia.

**ROBERT M. BATES**, a coal mine inspector for MSHA, was electrocuted on **November 30, 1978** while testing high-voltage switch gear at a surface substation.

**EMANUEL R. JONES**, a coal mine inspector for MSHA, perished in a mine accident on **August 20, 1981**.



Photo courtesy of MSHA Academy Archives

# THIS IS MSHA

## Mission

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An organization dedicated to sending healthy miners home...every shift, every day.

## Vision

---

Partners in leading the way to zero fatalities and the end of occupational illness.

## Core Values

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### **Commitment**

We are committed to protecting the health and safety of miners and our employees.

### **Excellence**

We strive for excellence and embrace positive change. The Agency's success is built upon the success of its employees.

### **Unity**

We act as one Agency united by our shared vision and core values.

### **Integrity**

We require complete honesty and integrity in everything we do.

### **Mutual respect**

We respect each other and treat everyone fairly and equitably.

### **Trustworthiness**

We make commitments with care and then live up to them. In all things, we do what we say we are going to do.

### **Efficiency**

We manage our resources responsibly in order to maximize our effectiveness in protecting miner safety and health.



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