



OCT 20 2020

Dear Mine Rescue Team Member,

Each year, we commemorate "Mine Rescue Day" on October 30th. We, again want to take the opportunity to thank you for your selfless dedication and willingness to be called upon in case of a mine emergency to fight a fire, search and rescue and to protect property if needed.

During 2020, your dedication has been called upon as always to keep your training updated as required by regulation and once again, you have risen to the occasion. 2020 has been a challenging year in many aspects with the COVID 19 Pandemic and we have asked that you maintain compliance with the regulation and do it in a safe manner when many contests have been canceled or postponed including the International contest that will now be in September 2022. You have been extremely innovative in COVID protections and have kept your teams safe and healthy because of it. As we near National Mine Rescue Day in 2020, we are on pace to achieve that emergency preparedness goal.

Both surface and underground mine rescue teams are certainly among an elite group, worthy of admiration and sincere thanks. The mining community sometimes loses sight of your importance when it goes an extended period of time without a major emergency that requires your expertise. Of course, we all hope that your skills will never again be needed, however; history has shown, that preparedness is crucial and that "if we fail to prepare, we prepare to fail!"

A couple other items of interest for the mine rescue community: Together, we are in the process of unifying "Coal" and "M/NM" rules for competition purposes and those of you that have been selected to serve on the committees, have done an outstanding job and are on course to complete mine rescue, first aid, bench and team tech rules by the end of 2020. Also, we are working on Virtual Reality mine rescue training and once complete, we think you will find it very interesting and exciting.

As the mining industry evolves, so does the need for improving skills, equipment and other support functions. Today, there are approximately 625 underground mines and over 12,000 surface mines operating in the country which includes both "Coal and Metal/Non Metal" and there have been instances where your skills have been called upon to enter non-operating or "abandoned" mines to search and rescue for missing people, and who knows, how many abandoned mines still exist? Again, we salute you for your bravery and courage in potentially difficult times and for your service to our nation's miners.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of David G. Zatezalo in blue ink.

David G. Zatezalo
Assistant Secretary of Labor for
Mine Safety and Health Administration

Handwritten signature of Jeff Kravitz in blue ink.

Jeff Kravitz
President, Holmes Mine
Rescue Association

Handwritten signature of Wes Kenneweg in blue ink.

Wes Kenneweg
President, National Mine
Rescue Association