

Fayette County Health Center
100 New Salem Road, Room 167
Uniontown, PA 15401
November 25, 2008

Bureau of Mine Safety

724-439-7469

TO: Bituminous, Anthracite, and Industrial Minerals Mine Operators

Section 2(5) of the Mine Families First Act, 52 P.S. §§ 1430.1–1430.7, (“Act”) establishes the Commonwealth’s policy that families of miners awaiting rescue during a mine emergency are to be treated with the dignity and respect they deserve and to make sure the families are provided updated information on rescue efforts before the public or the media and that the families’ needs and questions are attended to during a mine emergency. To implement this policy, Section 4(a) of the Act assigns the Department of Environmental Protection the responsibility for developing a Mine Families First Program as part of the Mine Emergency Response Program to ensure two-way communication between those persons in command of a mine emergency and the affected families, through the mine family first liaison staff. Section 4(b) of the Act requires the Department to develop a Mine Families First Response and Communication Plan to outline the steps that shall be taken by the Department and operators to communicate with families of miners involved in a mine emergency.

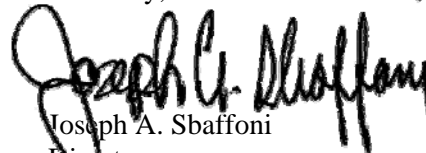
Section 6 of the Act establishes the Mine Families First Response and Communications Advisory Council for the purpose of assisting the Department in developing and updating the Mine Families First Response and Communications Plan. The Department, with assistance from this advisory council, developed the enclosed “Mine Families First Response and Communications Implementation Plan” to be part of your Mine Emergency Response Plan.

Within 60 days, please submit a detailed mine emergency response plan for Department approval that includes the actions you will take to implement the Mine Families First Response and Communications Plan as part of your Mine Emergency Response Program.

To promote consistency and eliminate confusion, this emergency response plan should consist of your MSHA Mine Emergency Response Plan amended to include the actions to be taken to implement the Mine Families First Response and Communication Plan.

If you have any questions on implementing this plan, please contact Jeffrey Stanckek at jstanchek@state.pa.us or 724-439-7302.

Sincerely,



Joseph A. Scaffoni
Director
Bureau of Mine Safety

Enclosure

cc: MSHA District #1, Kuzar
MSHA District #2, Ponceroff
PCA, Ellis
UMWA, O’Dell
MFFAC Members

bcc: J. Scott Roberts
J. Stefanko
J. Stanchek
D. Walker
T. Wolfgang
W. Bookshar
Bituminous Mine Inspectors`
Anthracite Mine Inspectors
Industrial Mineral Inspectors
C. Dunn
M. Cuthie
A. Gaida/MFFA File

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