

**Executive Summary
Proposed Rulemaking
Chapter 208 Underground Coal Mine Safety
Sensitive Ground Fault
25 Pa. Code Chapter 208**

Purpose of the Rulemaking

The Bituminous Coal Mine Safety Act directs the mining industry to undertake studies regarding possible means of enhancing safety of underground cables, including through, among other things, “more sensitive ground fault limiting and detection.” The statute requires both laboratory and underground testing of such systems, and requires that the Board of Coal Mine Safety take action on the industry’s reports and recommendations. This proposed rulemaking is the product of those statutory requirements. This proposed rulemaking ensures the enhancement of cable safety, reducing the risk of accidents and injuries resulting from electrocution. Such regulations benefit persons in and about mine sites and mine operators.

Summary of Proposed Rulemaking

The Board of Coal Mine Safety (Board) proposes adding a regulatory provision to Chapter 208 to address the safety of cables powering certain machines at underground bituminous coal mine sites. This addition, § 208.600 (relating to cable safety) and related definitions added to § 208.1, will read as set forth in Annex A, and will require operators to utilize sensitive ground fault protection devices on certain power centers. This proposed rulemaking reflects approximately three years of deliberation by the Board.

Affected Parties

There are nine operators of underground bituminous coal mines in Pennsylvania that will be subject to this proposed rulemaking, and three of those operators are small businesses.

Outreach

The development and drafting of this rulemaking was aided by input from the Board which received recommendations and advice on the rulemaking from its constituents. The Board is chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection and consists of three members representing the interests of mine workers and three members representing the interests of underground bituminous coal mine operators.