

**Executive Summary  
Final 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 final rulemaking is the product of those statutory requirements. This final 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 Final 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), will read as set forth in Annex A, and will require operators to utilize sensitive ground fault protection devices on certain power centers. This final rulemaking ensures the enhancement of cable safety, reducing the risk of accidents and injuries resulting from electrocution and 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 final rulemaking, and three of those operators are small businesses.

**Advisory Groups**

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.

**Public Comment**

The proposed regulation was published on March 18, 2017 at 47 Pa.B. 1636, for a thirty-day public comment period and received no public comment. On May 17, 2017, IRRC provided two comments. IRRC requested the Board’s justification for the regulation’s implementation schedule (60 months for retrofitting existing equipment), and clarity of certain definitions. Neither comment required changes to the proposed regulation.