



DIVISIONS  
ENERGY  
GAS AND OIL  
GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES  
MINED LAND RECLAMATION  
MINERAL MINING  
MINES  
ADMINISTRATION

## COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

### *Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy*

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Big Stone Gap, Virginia 24219-0900  
(276) 523-8100  
[www.dmme.virginia.gov](http://www.dmme.virginia.gov)

### **MEMORANDUM DM-23-01**

TO: All Coal Mine Operators

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_  
Marshall (Randy) Moore, Chief

SUBJECT: ***Mine Incident Response, Rescue, and Recovery Plan***

DATE: July 30, 2024

In accordance with §45.2-555.F of the *Coal Mine Safety Laws of Virginia*, an updated copy of the annual Coal Mine Safety Program (CMS) Mine Incident Response, Rescue, and Recovery Plan (PLAN) is attached (and will be published on the CMS Web Site) for your information and review with all appropriate mine personnel. This plan addresses areas in which the CMS will need to coordinate with mine operators during a mine emergency. The “Mine Emergency Notification Sheet”, included in the attached PLAN, should be completed and posted in a conspicuous location at the mine to be readily available should an emergency arise.

Distribution of the PLAN is scheduled annually to coincide with the “Winter Alert” period when the coal industry typically reviews the increased hazards for mine fires and explosions that develop with seasonal changes. You are encouraged to review the winter alert measures and the procedures for emergency response (developed specifically for your operation) with your staff and all miners.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this plan, please contact your DM Inspector or me at (276) 523-8223 / [Marshall.Moore@energy.virginia.gov](mailto:Marshall.Moore@energy.virginia.gov) or Mike Willis at 276-523-8226 / [Mike.Willis@energy.virginia.gov](mailto:Mike.Willis@energy.virginia.gov). Thank you.

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Attachment

*Virginia Energy*  
*Coal Mine Safety Program*

***MINE INCIDENT RESPONSE, RESCUE,  
AND RECOVERY PLAN***

*July 30, 2024*

**Department of Energy  
Coal Mine Safety Program**

**Mine Incident Response, Rescue, and Recovery Plan**  
**January 12, 2023**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Mine incidents are unforeseen and unplanned emergencies that require prompt action by individuals at the mine and by Coal Mine Safety Program (CMS) personnel. Mine incidents are, by definition, an emergency that can include fires, ignitions, explosions, entrapments, or inundations. Familiarization with the key role of Incident Commander, notification protocols, and the Mine Emergency Evacuation and Response Plan is of the utmost importance.

The intent of CMS's "Mine Incident Response, Rescue, and Recovery Plan" is to prepare CMS personnel to effectively carry out their role in the event of a mine incident. This role is to assure that notification, response, rescue, and recovery activities are conducted safely and efficiently, while providing for:

- Personal safety;
- The safety of others involved in response, rescue, and recovery;
- Establishment of a unified command structure on-scene;
- A safe and expedient means of locating and evacuating miners affected by the incident;
- Timely recovery of victims in the mine; and
- Timely and efficient mine recovery to enable a safe production restart.

CM personnel will familiarize themselves with the details of the plan and the responsibilities associated with their position, at least annually.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. The receiver of the initial notification of a mine emergency will document pertinent information and immediately initiate the internal emergency response process by notifying the Area Mine Inspector Supervisor, Chief, Assistant Chief, or Emergency Response Coordinator (ERC). The assigned Mine Inspector or a Mine Rescue Team member will respond and verify circumstances.
2. The Division of Mines (CMS) will verify any rumor of a mine emergency. If communication systems are inoperable, the information will be verified according to CMS policies and procedures.
3. The area Mine Inspector Supervisor will notify the Chief and/or Assistant Chief and the ERC . The ERC will coordinate notification of other CMS personnel for response to the scene of the emergency or for stand-by status.
4. The ERC or area Mine Rescue Team Leader will respond promptly to the scene and initiate the Department of Virginia Energy policies and procedures with assistance from other DM staff.
5. The Chief or Assistant Chief will maintain overall responsibility for the direction of all CMS activities during the emergency period. The Chief and/or Assistant Chief, in communications with the ERC Coordinator and Mine Inspector Supervisors, will coordinate activities of the Mine Rescue Team members and Mine Inspector Supervisors.
6. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) protocols will be initiated with the first CMS representative on-scene. A Unified Command Center will be established, along with other key centers or outposts. The first CMS representative on-scene will assume the Incident Commander role and cooperate with company officials and other responding agencies.
7. In consultation with the ERC and on-scene Incident Commander, the Mine Inspector Supervisor or Assistance Chief will notify and dispatch any additional CMS personnel needed at the emergency scene.
8. The Chief or Assistant Chief will contact and brief the Virginia Energy Deputy Director and Public Relations Manager.
9. The Chief or Assistant Chief will coordinate mine emergency response activities with various Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) officials, mine operators, and representatives of mine labor.
10. The Virginia Energy Public Relations Manager will be responsible for communicating with the media, MSHA, mine operators, and other representatives regarding media releases.
11. A comprehensive record of activities will be maintained throughout the emergency period. The first CMS representative to arrive at the scene will be responsible for maintaining a record of activities until relieved of this task.

## **DUTIES**

Special duties may be assigned to CMS personnel at the emergency scene to assist in maintaining control and coordinating rescue and recovery activities. The assignments will be coordinated with the Mine Rescue Team members, MSHA, mine operator, and representatives of the miners.

1. The following assignments may be made to CMS staff to assist with rescue and recovery efforts:

- ★ Electrical Coordinator
- ★ Engineering and Planning Coordinator
- ★ Incident Command Center Coordinator
- ★ Joint Information Officer
- ★ Logistics Coordinator
- ★ Mine Rescue Team Briefing/Debriefing Coordinator
- ★ Safety Liaison
- ★ Site Security Coordinator
- ★ Surface Coordinator
- ★ Ventilation Coordinator

These coordinators will be responsible for applicable functions and record keeping associated with pertinent rescue activities.

2. The emergency scene will be secured and only those persons involved with and supporting the rescue and recovery will be authorized in the area.
3. An accurate, written record of all rescue and recovery activities will be maintained by a CMS representative during the entire rescue and recovery effort.
4. A check-in / check-out system for personnel entering and leaving the mine will be established and maintained at the Incident Command Center.
5. CMS Technical Specialists will be available to assist with emergency efforts in the areas of mine mapping, drilling, ventilation, roof, and electricity. In the case of Small Mine Safety Service (SMSS) mines, SMSS personnel.
6. Surface and underground mine atmosphere monitoring stations will be established and monitored by CMS personnel with a record maintained for all tests and samples taken.
7. Regular media briefings will be coordinated by the Joint Information Officer and Unified Command Center personnel. The Virginia Energy Public Relations Manager will represent Virginia Energy (unless otherwise assigned by him/her).

***The Department of Energy  
Coal Mine Safety Program***  
***Mine Incident Response, Rescue, and Recovery Plan***

**NOTIFICATION**

The success of incident, response, rescue, and recovery during a mine emergency is greatly influenced by the initial notification and the accuracy of information received by the *“first point of contact”*. It is important that the first person at CMS to be notified of a mine incident shall obtain and document as much detail as is available so appropriate personnel can be accurately informed and respond accordingly. This information should include:

- Name of person reporting emergency.
- Has the subject mine initiated their mine emergency response and evacuation plan?  
     Yes     No
- Obtain one or more call-back numbers to ensure continued status updates as DM personnel are responding.
- **Company Name:**
- **Mine Name and Index No.:**
- Mine location (county, community; state or county route number).
- Mine telephone number (if different from the call-back numbers).
- Date and time of incident.
- Nature of incident (briefly describe the incident).
- Are all miners and mine personnel accounted for?  Yes     No

**If NO,**

What is the known condition of personnel involved:

- Number of fatalities?
- Number of miners injured?

- Number of miners unaccounted for? \_\_\_\_\_
- Have all miners been evacuated? \_\_\_\_\_
- Last known location of miners? \_\_\_\_\_
- Time of last contact? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is transportation available from miners' last known location? \_\_\_\_\_
- Are escape routes blocked from miners' last known location? \_\_\_\_\_
- Are attempts being made to contact missing miners at least every 15 minutes? \_\_\_\_\_

Yes     No

**If YES**

- Number of miners evacuated? \_\_\_\_\_
- What escape routes are being utilized? \_\_\_\_\_
- Mode of transportation for evacuation? \_\_\_\_\_
- Are attempts being made to contact missing miners at least every 15 minutes? \_\_\_\_\_

Yes     No

What incident activities are on-going underground:

- Fire fighting attempts? \_\_\_\_\_ (How many miners responding? \_\_\_\_\_)
- Entrapment recovery attempts? \_\_\_\_\_ (How many miners responding? \_\_\_\_\_)
- Responding to mine system alarm and unknown event? \_\_\_\_\_ (How many miners responding? \_\_\_\_\_)

What is the status of the following mine systems:

- Mine fan(s)? \_\_\_\_\_
- How has the incident affected the mine ventilation circuits?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Has the incident affected mine drainage or pumping activities? \_\_\_\_\_
- How has the incident affected the mine electrical circuits (surface and underground)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Has power circuits underground been interrupted?  )

- Has transportation from any section to the surface been blocked?
- Are primary and secondary escapeways open and clear?
- Is the mine-wide monitoring or miner tracking system functional?

In addition to the initial incident, what other hazards are known or have developed:


Notifications:

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) (911).  
Explain needs for Sheriff's Department, State Police, road blocks, and route numbers.  
Number of officers requested for site security  . Fire and rescue needs  .  
Resources needed from VDEM:

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Federal Agencies (MSHA: 1-800-746-1553)  
 State Agencies (Other State Agencies)  
 Mine Rescue Teams:

<u>COMPANY</u>	<u>Telephone Number</u>	<u>Cell Number</u>
Buchanan Minerals, LLC	276-498-7085	304-320-5555
Inmet Mining, LLC	606-446-3001	606-733-0165
Alpha Metturgical Resources	276-679-7107	606-634-6359
Virginia Small Operators Mine Rescue	276-395-2961	606-634-6359
Wellmore Coal Company	423-279-6900 Ext. 7738	276-696-3351
Virginia Energy Mine Rescue	276-523-8231	276-298-8596

Company Security:

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Continued contact:

Establish a specific call-back number and time (within 15 to 30 minutes) in order to continue a status update for responding CMS personnel and management.

Present status of situation:


Once notification of a mine incident is received by any CMS representative and the above key information recorded, it is important to immediately activate CMS's mine incident notification plan:

- CMS Chief (276) 523-8226 or Assistant Chief (276) 523-8231
- CMS Emergency Operations Center (EOC) – (276) 523-9693
- Mine Inspector Supervisors:– Hersh Hayden – (276) 523-8228; Chris Whitt- 276-298-5896

**It is essential that CMS be represented as soon as possible at the site of any mine emergency and assist in establishing a Unified Command Center. CMS staff, including the Mine Rescue personnel, are required to respond to any emergency scene in accordance with the Coal Mine Safety Laws of Virginia §45.1-161.80 and CMS Emergency Response Procedures. The first designated representative to arrive at the emergency scene will assume responsibility for the Virginia Energy until relieved or assigned other duties. Policies of the Virginia Energy including the Emergency Response Procedures, Rescue and Recovery Plan, and Media Relations Plan will be complied with throughout the emergency.**

**Attached are two forms developed to assist Virginia Coal Mine Operators in the event of a mine emergency:**

- Mine Emergency Data**
- Mine Emergency Notification Sheet**

**MINE EMERGENCY DATA**

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mine Name/  
Index Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Mine Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Mine Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Emergency: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Reporting Emergency: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Emergency Notification: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Emergency Notification: \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree of Seriousness: \_\_\_\_\_

Names or Number of Injured and/or Persons Unaccounted For: \_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Present Status of Mine, Ventilation, and Electrical Systems: \_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Present Status of Situation: \_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**MINE EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SHEET**

Company Name	
Mine Name/Index No.	
Federal I.D. No.	
Rescue Squad Telephone No.	
County Sheriff Department Telephone No.	
Mine Rescue Coverage Telephone No.	
VA State Police Telephone No.	
Air Ambulance Telephone No.	
Flight Landing Coordinates	
Mine Coordinates	

**Company / Mine Officials**

**Phone Numbers**


**Employee Representative**

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**Virginia Division of Mines**

M. Randy Moore, Chief	(276) 523-8223	(276) 393-1409 or 275-1015
Michael Willis, Assistance Chief	(276) 523-8231	(423) 416-6242
Chris Whitt, Emergency Response Coord.	(276) 523-9693	(276) 298-5896
Hersh Hayden, Mine Inspector Supervisor	(276) 523-8228	(276) 639-5329 (276) 393-4267

**Office Hours**

**After Hours**

**Mine Safety & Health Administration (MSHA)**  
 MSHA, National Accident Reporting Hotline 1-800-746-1553  
 MSHA, Norton District (276) 321-6605