

or indelible pencil in a book approved by the Secretary provided for that purpose a report of the condition of the mine or portion thereof under his supervision, which report shall state clearly the location and nature of any hazardous condition observed by him or reported to him during the day and what action was taken to remedy such condition. Such book shall be kept in an area on the surface of the mine chosen by the operator to minimize the danger of destruction by fire or other hazard, and shall be open for inspection by interested persons.

**(x) Reopening of abandoned or declared inactive mine; notification; inspection**

Before a coal mine is reopened after having been abandoned or declared inactive by the operator, the Secretary shall be notified, and an inspection shall be made of the entire mine by an authorized representative of the Secretary before mining operations commence.

**(y) Separation of intake and return aircourses from belt haulage entries; standards**

(1) In any coal mine opened after the operative date of this subchapter, the entries used as intake and return aircourses shall be separated from belt haulage entries, and each operator of such mine shall limit the velocity of the air coursed through belt haulage entries to the amount necessary to provide an adequate supply of oxygen in such entries, and to insure that the air therein shall contain less than 1.0 volume per centum of methane, and such air shall not be used to ventilate active working places. Whenever an authorized representative of the Secretary finds, in the case of any coal mine opened on or prior to the operative date of this subchapter which has been developed with more than two entries, that the conditions in the entries, other than belt haulage entries, are such as to permit adequately the coursing of intake or return air through such entries, (1) the belt haulage entries shall not be used to ventilate, unless such entries are necessary to ventilate, active working places, and (2) when the belt haulage entries are not necessary to ventilate the active working places, the operator of such mine shall limit the velocity of the air coursed through the belt haulage entries to the amount necessary to provide an adequate supply of oxygen in such entries, and to insure that the air therein shall contain less than 1.0 volume per centum of methane.

(2) In any coal mine opened on or after the operative date of this subchapter, or, in the case of a coal mine opened prior to such date, in any new working section of such mine, where trolley haulage systems are maintained and where trolley wires or trolley feeder wires are installed, an authorized representative of the Secretary shall require a sufficient number of entries or rooms as intake aircourses in order to limit, as prescribed by the Secretary, the velocity of air currents on such haulageways for the purpose of minimizing the hazards associated with fires and dust explosions in such haulageways.

**(z) Pillar extractions; bleeder systems and sealing requirements; standards**

(1) While pillars are being extracted in any area of a coal mine, such area shall be ventilated in the manner prescribed by this section.

(2) Within nine months after the operative date of this subchapter, all areas from which pillars have been wholly or partially extracted and abandoned areas, as determined by the Secretary or his authorized representative, shall be ventilated by bleeder entries or by bleeder systems or equivalent means, or be sealed, as determined by the Secretary or his authorized representative. When ventilation of such areas is required, such ventilation shall be maintained so as continuously to dilute, render harmless, and carry away methane and other explosive gases within such areas and to protect the active workings of the mine from the hazards of such methane and other explosive gases. Air coursed through underground areas from which pillars have been wholly or partially extracted which enters another split of air shall not contain more than 2.0 volume per centum of methane, when tested at the point it enters such other split. When sealing is required, such seals shall be made in an approved manner so as to isolate with explosion-proof bulkheads such areas from the active workings of the mine.

(3) In the case of mines opened on or after the operative date of this subchapter, or in the case of working sections opened on or after such date in mines opened prior to such date, the mining system shall be designed in accordance with a plan and revisions thereof approved by the Secretary and adopted by such operator so that, as each working section of the mine is abandoned, it can be isolated from the active workings of the mine with explosion-proof seals or bulkheads.

(Pub. L. 91-173, title III, §303, Dec. 30, 1969, 83 Stat. 767.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

For the operative date of this subchapter, referred to in subsecs. (b), (l), (o), (q), (r), (t), (y), and (z)(2), (3), see section 509 of Pub. L. 91-173, set out as an Effective Date note under section 801 of this title.

BELT HAULAGE ENTRIES FOR VENTILATION

Pub. L. 110-161, div. G, title I, §112(a), Dec. 26, 2007, 121 Stat. 2168, provided that: "Not later than June 20, 2008, the Secretary of Labor shall propose regulations pursuant to section 303(y) of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 [30 U.S.C. 863(y)], consistent with the recommendations of the Technical Study Panel established pursuant to section 11 of the Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response (MINER) Act (Public Law 109-236) [enacting section 963 of this title], to require that in any coal mine, regardless of the date on which it was opened, belt haulage entries not be used to ventilate active working places without prior approval from the Assistant Secretary. Further, a mine ventilation plan incorporating the use of air coursed through belt haulage entries to ventilate active working places shall not be approved until the Assistant Secretary has reviewed the elements of the plan related to the use of belt air and determined that the plan at all times affords at least the same measure of protection where belt haulage entries are not used to ventilate working places. The Secretary shall finalize the regulations not later than December 31, 2008."

**§ 864. Combustible materials and rock dusting**

**(a) Accumulations; maintenance**

Coal dust, including float coal dust deposited on rock-dusted surfaces, loose coal, and other combustible materials, shall be cleaned up and

not be permitted to accumulate in active workings, or on electric equipment therein.

**(b) Abatement of hazards in active working areas**

Where underground mining operations in active workings create or raise excessive amounts of dust, water or water with a wetting agent added to it, or other no less effective methods approved by the Secretary or his authorized representative, shall be used to abate such dust. In working places, particularly in distances less than forty feet from the face, water, with or without a wetting agent, or other no less effective methods approved by the Secretary or his authorized representative, shall be applied to coal dust on the ribs, roof, and floor to reduce dispersibility and to minimize the explosion hazard.

**(c) Rock dusting of all areas of underground mines; exceptions**

All underground areas of a coal mine, except those areas in which the dust is too wet or too high in incombustible content to propagate an explosion, shall be rock dusted to within forty feet of all working faces, unless such areas are inaccessible or unsafe to enter or unless the Secretary or his authorized representative permits an exception upon his finding that such exception will not pose a hazard to the miners. All crosscuts that are less than forty feet from a working face shall also be rock dusted.

**(d) Distribution of rock dust; places, quantities**

Where rock dust is required to be applied, it shall be distributed upon the top, floor, and sides of all underground areas of a coal mine and maintained in such quantities that the incombustible content of the combined coal dust, rock dust, and other dust shall be not less than 65 per centum, but the incombustible content in the return aircourses shall be no less than 80 per centum. Where methane is present in any ventilating current, the per centum of incombustible content of such combined dusts shall be increased 1.0 and 0.4 per centum for each 0.1 per centum of methane where 65 and 80 per centum, respectively, of incombustibles are required.

**(e) Limitation of applicability**

Subsections (b) through (d) of this section shall not apply to underground anthracite mines.

(Pub. L. 91-173, title III, §304, Dec. 30, 1969, 83 Stat. 774.)

**§ 865. Electrical equipment**

**(a) Allowable equipment; replacements; maintenance; permits for noncompliance; renewals; limitations; list of electric face equipment; survey of new and rebuilt equipment; publication of results**

(1) Effective one year after the operative date of this subchapter—

(A) all junction or distribution boxes used for making multiple power connections inby the last open crosscut shall be permissible;

(B) all handheld electric drills, blower and exhaust fans, electric pumps, and such other low horsepower electric face equipment as the

Secretary may designate within two months after the operative date of this subchapter which are taken into or used inby the last open crosscut of any coal mine shall be permissible;

(C) all electric face equipment which is taken into or used inby the last open crosscut of any coal mine classified under any provision of law as gassy prior to the operative date of this subchapter shall be permissible; and

(D) all other electric face equipment which is taken into or used inby the last crosscut of any coal mine, except a coal mine referred to in paragraph (2) of this subsection, which has not been classified under any provision of law as a gassy mine prior to the operative date of this subchapter shall be permissible.

(2) Effective four years after the operative date of this subchapter, all electric face equipment, other than equipment referred to in paragraph (1)(B) of this subsection, which is taken into or used inby the last open crosscut of any coal mine which is operated entirely in coal seams located above the watertable and which has not been classified under any provision of law as a gassy mine prior to the operative date of this subchapter and in which one or more openings were made prior to December 30, 1969, shall be permissible, except that any operator of such mine who is unable to comply with the provisions of this paragraph on such effective date may file with the Panel an application for a permit for noncompliance ninety days prior to such date. If the Panel determines, after notice to all interested persons and an opportunity for a public hearing under section 804 of this title, that such application satisfies the provisions of paragraph (10) of this subsection and that such operator, despite his diligent efforts, will be unable to comply with such provisions, the Panel may issue to such operator such a permit. Such permit shall entitle the permittee to an additional extension of time to comply with the provisions of this paragraph of not to exceed twenty-four months, as determined by the Panel, from such effective date.

(3) The operator of each coal mine shall maintain in permissible condition all electric face equipment required by this subsection to be permissible which is taken into or used inby the last open crosscut of any such mine.

(4) Each operator of a coal mine shall, within two months after the operative date of this subchapter, file with the Secretary a statement listing all electric face equipment by type and manufacturer being used by such operator in connection with mining operations in such mine as of the date of such filing, and stating whether such equipment is permissible and maintained in permissible condition or is nonpermissible on such date of filing, and, if nonpermissible, whether such nonpermissible equipment has ever been rated as permissible, and such other information as the Secretary may require.

(5) The Secretary shall promptly conduct a survey as to the total availability of new or rebuilt permissible electric face equipment and replacement parts for such equipment and, within six months after the operative date of this subchapter, publish the results of such survey.

(6) Any operator of a coal mine who is unable to comply with the provisions of paragraph