

1270-QCR-Safety

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Aug. 1, 2002

David Lauriski
Assistant Secretary
Mine Safety and Health Administration
U.S. Department of Labor
1100 Wilson Blvd., 23rd Floor
Arlington, Va. 22209

Sent via e-mail to MSHA public affairs

Dear Asst. Secretary Lauriski,

Please consider this a request made under the federal Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.

Please make available for my inspection and copying the following public records:

1. MSHA investigation reports, citations and all other records concerning previous underground mine "inundations" in the state of Pennsylvania since June 1999. As you may know, an article in the July 26, 2002, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reported that there have been at least four such incidents during that time period.
2. Copies of all inspection reports, citations and other documents concerning citations issued to the Quecreek No. 1 Mine (MSHA ID 3608746) for inspections and citations and inspections since Jan. 1, 1998.
3. Copies of all inspection reports, citations and other documents concerning citations issued to PBS Coals Mine No. 1 (MSHA ID 3603328) for inspections and citations since Jan. 1, 1998.
4. Copies of mine maps contained in MSHA files for the Quecreek No. 1 Mine and the nearby Saxon Coal and Coke Mine.
5. Copies of the original roof control, ventilation and mining plans submitted to MSHA for Quecreek No. 1, and any correspondence, meeting records, memos or other documents concerning those plans.
6. Copies of any proposed or approved amendments or changes to the plans mentioned in No. 5, along with copies of any correspondence, meeting records, memos or other documents concerning those changes.
7. As per my discussion with Rodney Brown of your public affairs office, investigation or inspection reports or other records concerning any other underground mine inundations nationwide in the last five years.
8. Copies of any reports, memos or documents which examine the adequacy of underground mine maps.

I hereby request that you expedite this request, as I am a newspaper report who plans to write stories about potential threats to public health and safety from mine inundations. I am primarily engaged in disseminating information, and the documents I have requesting are urgently needed to inform the public concerning government activity to prevent such accidents.


I also hereby request that you waive any copying and search fees that might otherwise be associated with this request, as provided in 20 C.F.R. 70.41. The information I am requesting concerns the operations or activities of government, the disclosure of this information is likely to contribute to a public understanding of those government activities and contribute to the public understanding in a significant manner. The public's interest in the publication of stories based on this information exceeds any commercial interest of mine in obtaining the records.

If you choose not to waive any applicable fees, and these fees will exceed \$100, please advise me before you proceed.

I would prefer to receive actual copies of the records I request. However, if that is a burden, I would be willing to review the records at the closest MSHA office to my office in Charleston, W. Va.

Please contact me if you have any questions about this request. I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,


Ken Ward Jr.
Staff Writer