

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2015 SESSION

CHAPTER 397

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 45.1-161.174, 45.1-161.193, 45.1-161.200, 45.1-161.249, and 45.1-161.258 of the Code of Virginia, relating to coal mine safety.

[H 2257]

Approved March 23, 2015

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 45.1-161.174, 45.1-161.193, 45.1-161.200, 45.1-161.249, and 45.1-161.258 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 45.1-161.174. Checking system; tracking system.

A. Each mine shall have a personnel checking system containing the following:

1. Every person underground shall have on his person means of positive identification bearing a number recorded by the operator;
2. An accurate record of the persons in the mine shall be kept on the surface in a place that will not be affected by an explosion;
3. The record shall consist of a written record, check board, lamp check, or time-clock record; and
4. The record shall bear a number identical to that carried by the person underground.

B. Mine-wide tracking systems shall be maintained in useable and operative conditions.

§ 45.1-161.193. Electric equipment.

A. Electric equipment taken into or used in by the last open crosscut or in other than intake air shall be permissible equipment.

B. Permissible equipment used in areas specified in subsection A shall be maintained in permissible condition.

C. Electric equipment shall not be taken into or operated in any place where a methane level of one percent or more is detected.

D. Voltage limitations for underground installations of electric equipment using direct or alternating current shall conform to the voltages provided in 30 C.F.R. § 18.47.

E. Electric equipment must be permissible and maintained in a permissible condition when such equipment is located within 150 feet of pillar workings or longwall faces.

F. Electric conductors and cables installed in or by the last open crosscut, or within 150 feet of pillar workings or longwall faces, shall be:

1. Shielded high-voltage cables supplying power to permissible longwall and other equipment;
2. Interconnecting conductors and cables of permissible longwall equipment;
3. Conductors and cables of intrinsically safe circuits; or
4. Cables and conductors supplying power to low and medium voltage permissible equipment.

G. Electric equipment shall be maintained in safe operating condition at all times while it is being used, and any unsafe condition shall be corrected promptly or the equipment shall be removed from service.

§ 45.1-161.200. Firefighting equipment; fire prevention.

A. Each mine shall be provided with suitable ~~fire-fighting~~ *firefighting* equipment, adequate for the size of the mine.

B. The following equipment, at a minimum, shall be immediately available at each mine:

1. A water car filled with water and provided with hose and pump, or waterlines and necessary hoses;
2. At least three 20-pound dry chemical fire extinguishers;
3. Ten 50-pound bags of rock dust, available at doors or other strategic places;
4. Bolt cutters which may be used to cut trolley wire in an emergency;
5. One pair of rubber gloves to be used with bolt cutters when cutting trolley wire;
6. Two sledge hammers; and
7. Five hundred square feet of brattice cloth, nails and hammer.

C. Clean dry sand, rock dust, or fire extinguishers, suitable from a toxic and shock standpoint, shall be provided and placed at each electrical station, such as substations, transformer stations and permanent pump stations, so as to be out of the smoke in case of a fire in the station.

D. Suitable fire extinguishers shall be provided at all (i) electrical stations, such as substations, transformer stations, and permanent pump stations; (ii) self-propelled mobile equipment; (iii) belt heads and at the inby end of belts; (iv) areas used for the storage of flammable materials; (v) fueling stations; and (vi) other areas that may constitute a fire hazard, so as to be on the fresh air side in case of a fire.

E. All ~~fire-fighting~~ *firefighting* equipment and fire sensor systems shall be maintained in a useable and operative condition. Chemical extinguishers shall be examined every six months and the date of the

examination shall be indicated on a tag attached to the extinguishers.

F. A sufficient number of approved one-hour self-contained self-rescuers shall be readily available, not more than 100 feet away, for the persons involved in the moving or transporting of any unit of off-track mining equipment.

§ 45.1-161.249. Duties of mine foreman.

A. The mine foreman shall see that the requirements of this Act that pertain to his duties and to the health and safety of the miners are fully complied with at all times.

B. The mine foreman shall see that every miner employed to work in such mine before beginning work therein, is aware of all hazardous conditions incident to his work in such mine. ~~The mine foreman shall also see that every miner employed in such mine shall be furnished with copies of this Act and the printed rules pertaining to such mine.~~ Any imminent danger that cannot be removed within a reasonable time shall be reported to the Chief by the quickest available means.

§ 45.1-161.258. Areas with safety or health hazards; duties of surface mine foreman.

A. Any hazardous condition shall be corrected promptly or the affected area shall be barricaded or posted with warning signs specifying the hazard and proper safety procedures. Any imminent danger that cannot be removed within a reasonable time shall be reported to the Chief by the quickest available means.

B. The surface mine foreman shall see that the requirements of this Act pertaining to his duties and to the health and safety of the miners are fully complied with at all times.

C. The surface mine foreman shall see that every miner employed to work at the mine, before beginning work therein, is aware of all hazardous conditions incident to his work at the mine.