



WINNER OF 2014 AVA DIGITAL GOLD AWARD

BY THE NUMBERS

What's New

Nine States Awarded \$50.7 Million in Workforce Innovation Grants

The department continued its focus on job-driven training by awarding \$50.7 million as part of the Workforce Innovation Fund grant competition. The funding, which was awarded on Sept. 24, will help improve the efficiency of federal and state job training programs and encourage greater collaboration between employers and industry groups. "More than ever, we're pursuing job-driven training by aligning our programs with the needs of employers and making sure that everything we're doing is preparing ready-to-work Americans with ready-to-be-filled jobs," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Perez. Grantees also are required to evaluate programs funded through this grant to increase the public's understanding of what works in workforce development. Eleven grants were awarded to organizations in nine states. This award brings the total funding through the Workforce Innovation Fund initiative to nearly \$222 million.

• [Read the News Release](#)

\$500,000 Awarded for State Studies on Paid Family, Medical Leave

The Family and Medical Leave Act guarantees unpaid, job-protected leave for workers to care for new children, ill family members or their own health. However, many workers cannot afford unpaid time off. On Sept. 24, the department awarded \$500,000 to the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, Montana and Rhode Island to undertake studies on the feasibility of paid leave. "Too many working families today can't afford to take the time they need to care for their families or themselves because they lack any form of paid leave," said Secretary Perez. "We need to do more to give people the tools to be responsible employees and good caregivers, so they don't have to choose between the families they love and the jobs and economic security they need."

• [Read the Blog Post](#)

• [Read the News Release](#)

• [Learn About Paid Leave](#)



(Work in Progress) The Best of Our Blog

Each week, this space will bring you the best from our [\(Work in Progress\)](#) blog.

• [ESOP 101](#): 4 Tips for Business Owners: Roughly 6,800 U.S. companies have an Employee Stock Ownership Plan, so it's important that business owners understand these tips to make sure the stock is valued correctly, writes Phyllis Borzi, assistant secretary of labor for employee benefits security.

• [In Support of Paid Leave](#): More than 30 million of America's working families have young children, and more than 25 million workers provide unpaid care for elderly relatives and loved ones every year, writes Latifa Lyles, director of the Women's Bureau.

• [Labor Commitments in Trade Agreements](#): "More than Words on a Page": Christopher P. Lu, deputy secretary of labor, helped announce an unprecedented action to enforce a U.S. free trade agreement on behalf of workers in Guatemala and here at home.



This week's phrase is Zone Status, which refers to the financial health review of multiemployer plans required by

National News

Grants to Expand Job Opportunities for People with Disabilities



the Pension Protection Act of 2006. Plans found to be in the endangered or critical zones require corrective actions to restore their financial health.

- [Learn More About Zone Status](#)
- [See All the A-Z Terms](#)

Championing Inclusion

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, signed by President Obama earlier this year, is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. On Sept. 22, the department announced the creation of an advisory committee to study and provide recommendations to the secretary of labor on ways to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The committee will consist of leaders from various federal agencies and members of the public. "Individuals with disabilities can make significant contributions to our workplaces," said Secretary Perez. "This advisory committee will help American Job Centers, Workforce Development Boards and vocational rehabilitation agencies nationwide work collaboratively to promote employment opportunities for this pool of talented workers."

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Learn More About Disability Employment Policy](#)

Dialogue on Career Pathways

The departments of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services joined together on Sept. 23 to host the National Dialogue on Career Pathways — an effort to bring attention to the critical role career pathways systems play in creating a strong economy. The information-packed event featured messages from federal agency leaders, who provided their perspectives on the importance of career pathways as a job-driven training strategy. The agenda also featured presentations and panel discussions from some of the nation's leading career pathways practitioners and business leaders. Eric Seleznow, deputy assistant secretary of labor at the Employment and Training Administration, closed out the day by encouraging states and local leaders to register for the "Pathways to Success Network," a technical assistance resource to strengthen existing and/or develop new career pathways systems in states, regions, local areas and tribes.

- [Learn More About the National Dialogue on Career Pathways](#)
- [Register for the Pathways to Success Network](#)

Honoring Innovation and

Six states — California, Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota and South Dakota — were awarded \$14.8 million to improve employment opportunities for adults and youth with disabilities. The grants will allow these states to expand access to programs that offer career pathways and encourage greater partnerships between educational institutions, business owners and disability advocates. This is the fifth round of funding for the Disability Employment Initiative, which supports 37 projects in 26 states. "Breaking down barriers to employment for people with disabilities is important in order for our country to field a full team and ensure that no worker is left behind," said Secretary Perez.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Funding for Mine Safety, Emergency Preparedness



Seven organizations that provide education and training within the mining industry will receive \$1 million from the Mine Safety and Health Administration. MSHA awarded the funding on Sept. 25 through its Brookwood-Sago grants program. The program is named in remembrance of 13 men who died in two explosions

at the Jim Walter Resources Inc.'s No. 5 Mine in Brookwood, Ala., in 2001, and 12 men who died in an explosion at Wolf Run Mining Co.'s Sago Mine in Tallmansville, W.Va., in 2006. Funding will be used to develop and implement training and related materials for mine emergency preparedness, as well as for the prevention of accidents in all underground mines.

- [Read the News Release](#)

International Scene

In Germany, Seeking Insights for an Apprenticeship Expansion

Earlier this year, President Obama announced his goal to double the number of apprenticeships in the United States over the next five years. As part of the department's ongoing efforts to meet that goal, John Ladd, administrator of the Office of Apprenticeship, traveled to Germany to participate in a 5-



day study tour to learn more about the success of the German vocational education system and apprenticeship programs. Ladd was joined by colleagues from the U.S. Department of Commerce as well as representatives from education, workforce and economic development organizations eager to learn more about the success of the German "Dual System" for training workers for high-demand occupations. The information gained from the trip will help the department in its efforts to develop a truly unique American apprenticeship system. This fall, the department will announce a new \$100 million grant competition to expand apprenticeships in new and high-tech industries, the largest single investment in Registered Apprenticeship to date.

- [Learn More About Apprenticeship](#)

Diversity



Across the nation's capital, federal agencies are commemorating Hispanic Heritage Month. On Sept. 23, Naomi M. Barry-Pérez,

director of civil rights for the department, delivered the keynote address at a Department of Justice observance. The theme of the event was "Hispanics: A Legacy of History, a Present of Action and a Future of Success." Barry-Pérez urged attendees to celebrate diversity and appreciate the differences that make everyone unique. "We must innovate to succeed and innovation requires diversity," she said. "This Hispanic Heritage Month, let's celebrate our diversity and our interdependence."

- [Read the Secretary's Blog Post](#)

Retirement Security Message

The 40th anniversary of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act provided the backdrop for a meeting of the National Coordinating Committee for Multiemployer Plans. Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employee Benefits Security Phyllis C. Borzi delivered the keynote address at the meeting in Hollywood, Fla., on Sept. 23, where she discussed ERISA and retirement and health-care security. The law was passed, Borzi told the group, at a time when retirement benefits were very vulnerable. Today, millions of workers and families rely on ERISA to ensure that their benefits remain secure. In 1974 and today, multiemployer plans play an important role in achieving that security.

- [Learn About ERISA's History](#)

Advancing Integrated Employment

Promoting integrated employment as the first option for people with disabilities was the focus of two recent events keynoted by Assistant Secretary of Labor for Disability Employment Policy Kathy Martinez. The first, on Sept. 19 at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City, gathered disability rights attorneys, service providers and students to explore the impact of the Supreme Court's decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.* The case affirmed that people with significant disabilities have the right to live and work in their communities. The second, on Sept. 24 in Des Moines, Iowa, was the annual meeting of the Iowa State Association for People Supporting Employment First. The meeting included service providers and state officials dedicated to improving employment outcomes for Iowans with significant disabilities. Discussing the department's commitment to integrated employment, including significant disabilities, Martinez said, "We believe that a presumption of employability should exist for all people, including youth and adults with significant disabilities, and the time is now for our

Extending Pacts on Safety and Health in China



Chinese safety and health leaders welcomed a delegation from the department on Sept. 22 and 23 to extend cooperation between the department and the State Administration of Work Safety of the People's Republic of China. Dr. David Michaels, assistant secretary of labor for occupational safety and health,

signed a memorandum of understanding with SAWS to continue a partnership that began in October 2002. Michaels also keynoted the 7th China International Forum on Work Safety during the visit, in addition to giving opening remarks at the 2014 International Conference on Pneumoconiosis Prevention and Treatment and speaking to students at Renmin University.

DOL Working for You

Homeless Veterans Reintegration Grant Provides New Opportunities

After being laid off from his auto factory job during the 2008 recession, personal problems mounted for Army veteran Ronald Allix. He eventually found himself divorced, homeless and struggling. In August, Allix, 46, along with 13 other veterans ages 25-to-60, graduated from the Blight Removal and Heavy Equipment Training Program at the Detroit Training Center, under a grant program funded by the department. All of them were placed in local jobs. Allix applied for the program after seeing



a flyer at Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries, which received a grant of \$300,000 through the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program in 2013. Today Allix holds state licenses in asbestos and lead abatement and a certificate in heavy equipment operation, and has been hired as a general construction laborer paying \$12.75 an hour. He is preparing to move out of the shelter. "This was a life-changing experience for me," Allix said. "Without the program I would likely still be stuck because I didn't have a clear path in mind to get into anything else." According to Patrick Beal, chief executive officer at the Detroit Training Center, "Veterans are great candidates for job placement; they are disciplined and eager to learn new skills. We focus our training on skills in demand by employers."

- [Learn About Grants to Assist Homeless Veterans](#)

DOL in Action

Crane Tips Over and Falls, Killing 2, at Massachusetts Site

The deaths of two workers in a crane tip-over in Bourne, Mass., could have been prevented if their employer, Massachusetts Bay Electrical Corp., had set up and operated the crane according to the manufacturer's instructions and trained employees in its proper operation, an Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspection has found. The employees were working from a raised personnel platform when the crane overturned and fell more than 150 feet. OSHA found that company employees were not properly trained or evaluated on the truck-mounted crane prior to use and that supervisors at the job site did not follow safety manual procedures for

nation to value individuals with disabilities for the unique skills and talents they bring by integrating them fully into our workplaces."

- [Learn About ODEP](#)

Workforce Transitions for Youth

Assistant Secretary of Labor for Disability Employment Policy
Kathy Martinez traveled to Chicago on Sept. 23 to address the National Association of



Workforce Development Professionals 2014 Youth Development Symposium. Designed to share best practices in youth programming, the event explored tactics that contribute to successful transitions for all youth — including youth with disabilities — such as individualized learning plans, and the promise of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. "Youth motivation and learning potential are optimized when young people have a meaningful say in defining their career and life goals based on their interests, values and skills," said Martinez. "And when they receive services and supports from caring adults like you that are transparent, well-coordinated and tailored to their needs, we can achieve great results."

- [Read About Individualized Learning Plans](#)

Help to Prevent Layoffs in Texas

Workers and business owners in Texas will have access to more tools to prevent layoffs thanks to a \$2.7 million grant awarded by the department on Sept. 22. The grant will be used to expand and enhance the state's Short Time Compensation program, also known as "work sharing." STC programs allow employers to reduce work hours for a group of employees rather than laying-off any one person. The loss of income due to the reduced hours would be replaced, in part, through unemployment insurance benefits. This is a win-win program: employees keep their jobs — and benefits — while employers maintain their skilled workforce. "Texas officials are taking proactive steps to prepare for future economic needs by accepting this federal funding, and I encourage all states to evaluate whether they can benefit from this federal resource," said Secretary Perez.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Deadly Tower Collapse

Following the death of two workers from the collapse of a cell tower they were dismantling on March 25, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited Wireless Horizon Inc. for two willful and four serious safety violations at a Blaine, Kan., work site. This year, 11 workers have lost their lives nationwide in the communication tower industry; 13 deaths occurred

setting up and operating the crane.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Sand and Gravel Company Cited After Worker Fatally Injured

Two workers were injured, one fatally, after being struck-by an excavator bucket while installing stormwater drainage in a trench in Holdrege, Neb., in July. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited Van Kirk Sand and Gravel, which operates as Van Kirk Brothers Contracting, for two serious safety violations related to the incident.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Philadelphia Farm Labor Contractor Sued for Wage Violations

The department has filed suit against Philadelphia farm labor contractor Heng Heng Agency Inc. and its president and owner Visith Oum for wage violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act and wage, record-keeping, registration and transportation violations of the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act. The lawsuit seeks \$146,100 in civil penalties because of Heng Heng's willful and repeat violations of the FLSA and violations of the MSPA. The suit follows an investigation by the Wage and Hour Division that was conducted at Medford Nursery of Lumberton, N.J., where Heng Heng supplied 125 temporary employees to cultivate and harvest nursery stock.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Alabama Manufacturer Faces Fines for Safety Hazards

Fras-le North America Inc. has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for 17 safety and health violations following a March inspection at the manufacturer's Prattville, Ala., facility. The citations were issued for hazards such as falls, amputations, electrocution and failure to train workers to safely depower machinery before servicing. Fras-le manufactures friction materials for the automotive industry, such as brake linings, pads and clutch discs. The inspection was initiated as part of OSHA's Regional Emphasis Program for Safety Hazards in the Auto Parts Industry. Proposed penalties total \$67,500.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Unsafe Crane Operation, Improper Forklift Usage at Georgia Company

Cooksey Iron & Metal Co., doing business as Cooksey Steel Co., was cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for 20 safety and health violations following an April inspection at the company's steel storage and distribution facility in Midville, Ga. Cooksey was issued citations relating to unsafe crane operations, improper forklift usage and exposing workers to electrical hazards. Proposed penalties total \$68,838.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Aluminum Plant Showed 'Total Disregard for Worker Safety and Health'

Employees at Matalco US Inc. in Canton, Ohio, were exposed to amputation, fall hazards and unsafe crane operations, according to an Occupational Safety and Health Administration complaint inspection. OSHA has issued two willful, one repeat and two serious safety violations, carrying proposed penalties of \$130,200. The manufacturing facility that produces aluminum material for use in automotive rims and other parts also has been placed in OSHA's Severe Violator Enforcement Program. "This company allowed workers to stand on blocks elevated by a forklift, and that's just one visible example of the total disregard for worker safety and health at this plant," said Howard Eberts, OSHA's area director in Cleveland.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Ohio Steel Mill Sued for Violating Whistleblower Protections

A lawsuit alleging that North Jackson Specialty Steel terminated a furnace operator for reporting unsafe working conditions at its North Jackson, Ohio,

in 2013. "Two families have lost their loved ones in a preventable tragedy. No one should ever have to endure that loss. Inspecting and ensuring equipment is in good working order is a common-sense safety procedure that stop injuries and fatalities," said Dr. David Michaels, assistant secretary of labor for occupational safety and health.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Farm Safety and Health Week



The agriculture sector accounted for 479 deaths in 2013, recording the highest fatality rate of any industry group last year. For that reason, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration joined

the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety for National Farm Safety and Health Week, Sept. 21-27. The week has been observed in September annually since 1944 as farmers prepare for harvest. This year's theme was "Safety Counts: Protecting What Matters." Dr. David Michaels, assistant secretary of labor for occupational safety and health, said, "We can all make a positive impact on the lives of agricultural workers, by protecting them from job hazards and ensuring they receive the right to safety training."

- [Read the News Release](#)

Town Halls for Nuclear Workers

Current and former nuclear weapons workers met with representatives from the Division of Energy Employees Occupational Illness Program on Sept. 23 and 25 in Amherst and Rochester, N.Y., respectively. The town hall-style discussions notified employees who worked at 39 facilities in the western New York area about the medical benefits and home health care services available to them under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act. More than 40 people attended and an additional 10 claims were filed as a result of the town halls. On-site resource center staff also assisted 30 people with existing claims and questions. In New York state, 4,621 employees or their families have received \$387.9 million in EEOICPA compensation and \$12.7 million in medical benefits to date.

- [Learn More About EEOICPA](#)

Weekly UI Claims

The department reported that the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial Unemployment Insurance claims was 293,000 for the week ending Sept. 20, an increase of 12,000 from the previous week's revised level. The four-week moving average was 298,500, down 1,250 from the previous week's revised average.

- [Read the News Release](#)

steel mill has been filed by the department. The suit alleges the company violated the whistleblower protection provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Act and seeks restoration of lost pay and benefits, compensatory and punitive damages, and compensation for attorney and other fees. "North Jackson Specialty Steel fired this employee for reporting unsafe conditions that jeopardized the safety of all workers at the mill," said Nick Walters, regional administrator for OSHA in Chicago.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Texas Union to Rerun Officer Election

American Federation of Government Employees Local 3320 in Houston recently agreed to conduct a new election for the offices of president, vice president and secretary on or before Oct. 31, 2014, under the supervision of the Office of Labor-Management Standards. An OLMS investigation disclosed that a candidate was denied a reasonable opportunity to campaign by not being provided requested information about making a campaign mailing to the membership. In addition, employer facilities were used when the former president sent an email to all employees through a government e-mail system prior to the election, which praised a nominee for president who ended up winning the election.

Roofer's Failure at 2 Illinois Work Sites 'a Question of Life or Death'

Roofing contractor Juan M. Garcia Martinez has been cited for four willful safety violations for exposing workers to fall hazards at two separate residential home sites in Tuscola, Ill. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration proposed penalties of \$48,400 for the recent citations. OSHA cited the company twice in March for similar violations. "Falls remain the leading cause of fatalities in the construction industry, and this company's refusal to protect these workers really is a question of life or death," said Thomas Bielema, OSHA's area director in Peoria.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Lawsuit Filed Against Postal Workers Local Union

The department recently filed suit against American Postal Workers Union Local 458 in Portland, Maine, concerning its election of officers in March. An Office of Labor-Management Standards investigation determined that the incumbent president used a union list containing members' home addresses and personal and work e-mail addresses to send campaign literature promoting his candidacy and the candidacy of the general vice president. The address lists were not shared with other candidates. The suit alleges that the violation may have affected the general president and general vice president races, and seeks a new election.

Massachusetts Welding Company Cited Following Fatal Boston Fire

A Malden, Mass., welding company has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for ineffective fire prevention training and other hazards following a March fire in Boston's Back Bay neighborhood that took the lives of two firefighters. Guiseppe Falcone and Daniele Falcone, doing business as D & J Ironworks, allowed employees to install railings using arc welding equipment during high-wind conditions. Fire officials said sparks from welding railings ignited clapboards on an adjacent shed, which led to the fire. "OSHA found that the company lacked an effective fire prevention and protection program, failed to train its employees in fire safety, did not have a fire watch present and did not move the railing to another location where the welding could be performed safely," said Brenda Gordon, OSHA's area director for Boston and southeastern Massachusetts.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Missing Safety Protocols Lead to Serious Worker Injury in Georgia

Upcoming Deadlines & Events

[Open Funding Opportunities](#)

OASAM — Vendor Outreach Session

- [October 22 — Washington, DC](#)

OFCCP — Understanding AAP Requirements

- [October 9 — Houston, TX](#)

OFCCP — Understanding the Nuts and Bolts of a Construction Audit

- [October 9 — Houston, TX](#)

OSHA — Stakeholder Meeting on Improving OSHA's Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory Program

- [October 22 — Washington, DC](#)

VETS — Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Veterans' Employment, Training and Employer Outreach (ACVETEO)

- [October 2 — Washington, DC](#)

WB — Paving the Way for Women in Construction: Creating Systems and Supports that Work Webinar

- [October 1 — Washington, DC](#)
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Meet the man who ensures workers get a fair days pay for a fair days work.
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 Show Summary



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1h

[#BannedBooksWeek](#) is an opportunity to look at some books that shaped work in America huff.to/ZYgAVt

An employee of John McAfee, doing business as McAfee Electric, suffered serious burns and required resuscitation by emergency responders following an incident at Oconee Fall Line Technical College in Dublin, Ga. The Wrightsville, Ga., company was contracted to install emergency light-emitting diode, or LED, lighting. The worker was injured while attempting to connect new wiring with existing wiring that was still powered. Following a March inspection, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited the employer with one willful and one serious safety violation. The citations were issued for allowing employees to work close to live electrical circuits without personal protective equipment and failing to provide eye protection to workers that were required to use power tools.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Silver Mine in Colorado Put on Notice

The Mine Safety and Health Administration has implemented one of its toughest enforcement actions. On Sept. 25, MSHA put Star Mine Operations LLC's Revenue Mine in Ouray County, Colo., on notice of a pattern of violations of mandatory health or safety standards under the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977. Revenue, an underground silver ore operation, was cited for 92 significant and substantial violations during the 12-month period ending on July 31. If a mine receives notice of a POV, Section 104(e) of the Mine Act requires all subsequent S&S violations be issued as withdrawal orders. An operator can be removed from these sanctions if no S&S violations are found within 90 days of the POV notice's issuance or an inspection of the entire mine results in no S&S violations.

- [Read the News Release](#)

New Jersey Company Faulted for Electrical, Machine Hazards

General Glass International of Secaucus, N.J., has been cited for 10 serious safety violations by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration after a complaint in March prompted an inspection. Many of the citations issued to the company were for electrical and machine hazards at the company's fabrication and design center. The violations carry proposed penalties totaling \$45,540.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Worker Reports Respiratory Inflammation After Welding Inside Railcar

A worker at Watco Investments LLC reported suffering from respiratory inflammation after performing welding work inside a rail car in Omaha, Neb. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited the company, operating as Watco Companies Inc., for three repeat and three serious safety violations, many involving OSHA's confined space safety regulations. Proposed fines total \$133,900. OSHA initiated the March inspection after receiving a report of the illness from the Nebraska Department of Labor Workers' Compensation Division.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Waste Hauler to Reinstate Supervisor Who Reported Safety Concerns

Stericycle Inc. has been found in violation of the Surface Transportation Assistance Act by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. An investigation determined that the company wrongfully terminated a transportation supervisor at its Wichita, Kan., terminal because the worker raised safety concerns after a driver was instructed to pull a trailer without a valid license plate. OSHA has ordered the company to reinstate the employee, pay back wages and damages of \$261,787. "When workers can't report safety concerns on the job without fear of losing it, worker safety and health suffers," said Marcia Drumm, acting regional administrator for OSHA in Kansas City, Mo.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Coal Mine Inspection Prompted by Hazard Complaints

Federal inspectors from the Mine Safety and Health Administration issued 131 citations and 11 orders during special impact inspections at 12 coal mines in August. An inspection at Camp Creek Mine in Wayne County, W.Va., was prompted by multiple hazard complaints to the MSHA hotline, during which callers alleged that the operator was mining coal without curtains to control dust exposure and employing tactics to hide the violations from inspectors. Over the past two years, MSHA has cited Camp Creek Mine 64 times for failing to follow the approved ventilation plan. "We continue to see mines ignoring required ventilation curtains needed to control methane gas and respirable coal dust that causes black lung," said Joseph A. Main, assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health. "The new respirable dust rule requires mine operators to conduct thorough exams each shift to ensure required ventilation and dust controls are in place, with top mine officials certifying those exams."

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