
BACKGROUND

2006EMPR0042-001307
Oct. 30, 2006

Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

SULLIVAN MINE REPORT CONFIRMS UNPRECEDENTED INCIDENT

Included in the chief inspector of mines' final report into the May 15 - 17, 2006 incident at the decommissioned Sullivan mine are the following recommendations to improve safety for workers and first responders at all mine sites in British Columbia.

Sullivan Mine Site

1. Implement the directives issued by the chief inspector of mines on May 25, 2006 related to identification of hazards downstream of dump sites. In addition, ensure that workers entering confined space environments downstream of waste dump sites are qualified in air sampling or accompanied by someone qualified in air sampling and that proper samples are taken and a safe atmosphere determined prior to entering these environments.
2. Sullivan mine operations shall develop and implement a tallying procedure to include all workers on site which will meet the requirements of Section 3.2.2(1) of the Health, Safety, and Reclamation Code (HSRC).
3. Sullivan mine operations shall develop and implement a procedure to ensure that a check is made to ensure the wellbeing of workers who may be working alone and that this check is made in accordance with Section 3.2.3 of the HSRC.
4. Develop and implement a monitoring program to determine the mechanism of mobilization of the atmosphere from within the dump out to the shed.

Other Mine Sites in B.C.

1. All mines in B.C. shall implement the directives issued by the chief inspector of mines on May 25, 2006 related to identification of hazards downstream of dump sites.
2. All mine sites in B.C., including non-producing mine sites, shall review the access procedures developed for that site and ensure that a tallying procedure is implemented in accordance with Section 3.2.2 (1).
3. Workers on all mine sites shall be subject to a check made in accordance with Section 3.2.3 of the HSRC.
4. Entrances to mine sites in B.C. shall be signed to include contact information to ensure that all persons entering a mine site are under the supervision of a qualified person.
5. When entering into agreements with emergency responders from off the mine site, the manager shall provide information that identifies hazards that may be encountered on the mine site and where the likelihood of encountering these hazards might occur.

Emergency Responders (non-mine site) i.e. BC Ambulance Service, Fire and Rescue, RCMP, Coroner's Service

1. All responders to mine sites shall be accompanied by a qualified representative of the mine appointed by the mine manager.
2. Emergency responders who may be called upon to assist in an emergency at a mine site shall be:
 - Familiarized with the hazards that may be encountered on the mine site and where these hazards might be encountered.
 - Trained to recognize and safeguard against the hazards identified above.

Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Petroleum Resources (the Ministry)

1. Incorporate the requirements of the chief inspector's directive of May 25, 2006 as regulations within the Health, Safety, and Reclamation Code (HSRC).
2. Modify the chief inspector's directive of May 25, 2006 to include the following:
 - Any opening (culvert or large pipe) with the potential to act as a conduit for transport of a hazardous atmosphere from within a mine waste dump shall be tested to ensure the atmosphere at the mouth of the opening is safe.
3. Modify the requirement of Section 1.3.1 of the HSRC to include site access contact information.
4. Include in the HSRC the requirement to advise emergency responders of the hazards which may be encountered on a mine site and the possible locations of these hazards.
5. Modify the requirement for notification of fatality to the Ministry (Section 1.7.1(1)) to Immediate.
6. Modify Section 37 (3.1(b)) of the Mines Act to increase the time limit for laying an information for an offence from six months to one year after completion of the Chief Inspectors' report or three years from date of occurrence.

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