

TITLE 36  
LEGISLATIVE RULES  
BOARD OF COAL MINE HEALTH AND SAFETY

SERIES 27  
RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING SURFACE  
AREAS OF UNDERGROUND MINES

**§36-27-1. General.**

1.1. Scope. -- Rules and Regulations Governing Surface Areas of Underground Mines.

1.2. Authority. -- W. Va. Code §22-6-4.

1.3. Filing Date. -- February 17, 1993

1.4. Effective Date. -- April 1, 1993

1.5. These rules and regulations shall have the effect of law and violations shall be deemed a violation of law and so cited with the same effect as law. All provisions of Article 1, Chapter 22 of the Code, relative to enforcement, are applicable to the enforcement of these rules and regulations.

**§36-27-2. Definitions.**

2.1. "High voltage powerline" means any uninsulated suspended power conductor carrying high voltage.

2.2. "Lanyard" means a rope, suitable for supporting one person. One end is fastened to a safety belt or harness and the other end is secured to a substantial object or a safety line.

2.3. "Lifeline" means a rope, suitable for supporting one person, to which a lanyard or safety belt (or harness) is attached.

2.4. "Safety belt" means a device, usually worn around the waist, which, by reason of its attachment to a lanyard and lifeline or a structure, will prevent a worker from falling.

2.5. All other terms used in these rules and regulations, not defined herein, shall have the

meanings set forth in Section 1, Article 1, Chapter 22 of the Code.

**§36-27-3. Operating Equipment With Suspended Material.**

3.1. All persons shall remain a safe distance from any supplies or materials while being raised, lowered or in transit, by a fork lift, crane, or other equipment: **Provided**, That whenever it is necessary to have persons other than the equipment operator in the immediate vicinity of any such supplies, the loads shall be securely fastened by a chain or other device to the equipment handling the load in order to prevent the load from slipping or falling off the equipment.

**§36-27-4. Protection From Falls From Elevated Areas.**

4.1. Safety protection such as safety belts, lifelines, or lanyards to prevent a person from falling shall be provided at all times where the potential fall distance exceeds fifteen (15) feet, except that safety belts shall not be used where they are impractical or would pose a greater hazard.

4.2. Safety nets shall be provided when work places are more than twenty-five (25) feet above the ground where the use of ladders, scaffolds, catch platforms, temporary floors, safety lines, or safety belts are impractical.

**§36-27-5. Safety Precautions On Coal Stockpiles.**

5.1. The following requirements shall apply to all surface coal stockpiles with draw-off tunnel feeders underneath the coal storage area

of the stockpile which discharge onto a conveyer belt:

5.1. No person shall travel on foot or operate equipment on a coal stockpile or coal storage area directly over areas where underlying coal feeders are in place without a plan approving such activity by the Director, or his authorized representative. The plan shall be submitted by the operator or the independent contractor performing the work, and shall be reviewed with all persons prior to work being done, and a record kept of such review.

5.2. The plan shall outline procedures to protect the health and safety of those who may have to travel on foot or operate equipment on a coal stockpile or coal storage area directly over areas where underlying coal feeders are in place. The minimum criteria for approval of the plan shall include:

a. The equipment shall be equipped with an enclosed cab.

b. The equipment shall have two-way communications.

c. The equipment operator shall be provided with a self-contained self-rescuer.

d. Warning signs shall be posted at the entrance to all coal stockpiles with underlying coal feeders.

e. No person shall travel on foot, except on an emergency basis, and only under direct supervision; they shall be secured by an overhead lifeline; and feeders shall be locked and tagged out.

5.3. The operator shall establish rules for the safe procedures for breaking through cavities and for marking the feeder areas on the surface. A copy of the rules shall be submitted to the Director of the Department of Energy for approval. A copy of the approved rules shall be posted at the mine site, and all persons to perform such work shall be instructed in these procedures.

5.4. Telephone or equivalent two-way communications shall be established between equipment operators working on stockpiles and those persons who are operating conveyors, feeders, and hoppers at storage piles (where more than one person performs these duties), in order to keep such equipment operators advised of the possibility of bridged material over a cavity in the stockpile.

#### **§36-27-6. Working Around High-Voltage Powerlines.**

6.1. Location of high-voltage powerlines. High-voltage powerlines located above surface work areas, driveways, haulageways, and railroad tracks shall be installed no less than fifteen (15) feet above ground.

6.2. Operation of equipment, minimum distance from high voltage lines.

6.2.1. Equipment or machinery operated on the surface of any coal mine shall not be operated within ten (10) feet of an overhead powerline unless the line is deenergized and visibly grounded at the point of work, or unless insulating barriers not part of or an attachment to, the equipment have been erected to prevent physical contact with the lines. Where the voltage of overhead powerlines is sixty-nine thousand (69,000) volts or more, the minimum clearance between the lines and part of the equipment or load shall be: (Please see Table 36-27a)

6.2.2. A person shall be designated to observe clearance of the equipment and give timely warning for all operations where it is difficult for the operator to maintain the desired clearance by visual means.

6.3. Movement of equipment; minimum distance from high voltage lines. When any part of any equipment operated on the surface of any coal mine is required to pass under or by any energized high-voltage powerline and the clearance between such equipment and powerline is less than that specified above, such powerlines shall be deenergized or other

precautions shall be taken to prevent contact with the powerlines.

6.4. Deenergization of powerlines. Any overhead wire shall be considered to be an energized line unless and until the person owning such line or electrical utility authorities verifies that it is not an energized line and it has been visibly grounded.

**§36-27-7. Tires and Repairs.**

7.1. A safety tire rack, cage, or equivalent protection shall be provided when inflating tires during installation on split rings or rims equipped with locking rings or similar devices. Tires shall be deflated before repairs on them are started, and means shall be provided to prevent wheel locking rims from creating a hazard during tire inflation. Different types and sizes of wheel rims in the same location shall be stored separate from each other.

**§36-27-8. Crushers, Feeders, And Rotary Breakers.**

8.1. No person shall be permitted to perform any work within the confines of the cargo space of a crusher, feeder, or rotary breaker unless such equipment has been deenergized and locked out.

**§36-27-9. Machines With Movable Parts.**

9.1. Ninety (90) days after the effective date of this section, machines with movable parts used at surface mines or surface areas of underground mines, which are capable of coming into contact with its operating controls, or is capable of pinning the operator between the movable part and its controls, shall be equipped with a panic bar or suitable mechanical means to prevent such contact, or pinning of the operator.

**§36-27-10. Seat Belts.**

10.1. Each employee working in a surface coal mine or in the surface areas of an underground coal mine shall be required to wear seat belts in a vehicle where there is a danger of

overturning and where roll protection is provided.

10.2. Seat belts shall be worn by all drivers of trucks, 5-ton or greater, while operating their trucks on surface mines and surface areas of underground mines.