



Link Line



an update from **WSN** on **YOUR** Mine Rescue program

Issue #32 Spring 2017

Functional drill tests emergency response

The Canadian Gypsum Company (CGC) is giving their Hagersville staff and mine rescue team high marks for their response to a full-scale functional fire drill late last year.

“Absolutely, it went really well,” said Mine Manager Mark Horner, of the December drill, kept secret from all workers, except Horner and Plant Manager Steve Forcier, until the approximately four-hour exercise ended.

The drill highlighted the fast response time of staff to the alarm, and the effectiveness of the mine rescuers, Horner said. “It was just very apparent our guys have gone through the extensive training they have, and that in the event of a worst-case scenario or any type of emergency, our guys will be able to respond very effectively.”

Planning for the full mock scenario began in October. Forcier and Horner “talked a little bit about how we wanted to do it, who would be involved, and what location we could do it in the mine so it would seem like a real-life thing; it would be plausible.”

District Mine Rescue Officer Dan Rulli and senior Ontario Mine Rescue officials were consulted, as was senior company management who were supportive.

“Then we started talking about the plans, and what equipment we might need” between ourselves and from OMR to make it run smoothly, Horner said.

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RIGHT THERE – The site of the 2017 Provincial Mine Rescue Competition will be approximately 1,750 feet under Lake Huron, in Compass Minerals Goderich Mine.

Small town, big mine readies for provincial

George Boutilier isn’t telling what he doesn’t know about this year’s Provincial Mine Rescue Competition.

“I want the best team to win. I want to know the least amount (that I need) so I have the infrastructure in place,” said Boutilier, the training and safety general foreman at Compass Minerals Goderich Mine, host of the competition.

Goderich, population 7,500, is one of the smallest communities to host a provincial competition (Marathon in 2011 and 1995, and Elliot Lake in 1982 were smaller) but Compass Minerals’ salt mine will be the largest ever competition site. Both factors pose challenges for organizers.

Compass Minerals decided to host the event about a year ago, just before the provincial competition in Sudbury, said

Boutilier, and planning got underway in September with a visit by Penny Pagan, Ontario Mine Rescue’s executive assistant, who closely co-ordinates with the host community on off-site needs.

Boutilier invited the Huron Chamber of Commerce to that meeting where a decision was made to play to the area’s strength as a tourist centre. Members are being canvassed for support, and the Huron County Museum, adjacent to Goderich’s attractive downtown, will be the viewers’ venue.

“Because the mine itself has such a small (surface) footprint, it’s very congested and there’s a lot of traffic, so to bring visitors on site would be tough to do. So we decided it’s a tourist town, let’s promote Goderich,” he said.

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We need you!

If you have comments about the newsletter, or suggestions for future articles, please contact Ken Sitter at WSN, (705) 474-7233 ext. 234, or kensitter@workplacesafetynorth.ca



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Secrecy maintained to end of drill

Alarm prompts quick response from workers, mine rescue volunteers

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“We did a pretty good job of keeping it under wraps. Forcier and myself, we kept it between ourselves. No one (else) knew it was a drill until right at the very end,” said Horner, who at the last minute recruited former mine rescue volunteer and mine technician Ian MacDonald to simulate “starting the fire” and be the sole casualty.

“I pulled him to the side in the morning and let him know what our plan was, and he was very excited to run it, so I knew he wasn’t going to be giving a wink to anybody.”

As mine technician, MacDonald travels throughout the mine, so his presence at any place in the mine or his absence during a roll call would seem reasonable. He was given a smoke machine, several smoke bombs, the general area to situate the “fire”, and instructions “to hang out there until they come and find you.”

Once the alarm went out at about 10:30 a.m., things happened quickly, said Horner, who put together a control group with available staff. Within 20 to 30 minutes, “we went through the information that we had, and through the roll call lists of who was underground, and quickly established who was in the different refuge stations, and that Ian was missing.”

“It took about 30 minutes for the team to be assembled under oxygen, and for us to have a solid plan, and what we thought was a good spot to start looking. Then it took approximately 40 minutes for them to locate him.”

TEAM EARNS PRAISE

The first team to go underground was led by Captain Chuck Taylor and was supported by Briefing Officer Aaron Constable. Both stepped up into key positions, worked well together and ensured the safety of the team, said Horner. The team included: #2 Man Jim Winkworth, #3 Man Matt Peebles, #4 Man Darren Martin and Vice-captain Tony Morris.

MacDonald, who feigned breathing difficulties and semi-consciousness, was not fully responsive to the team.

“He had a lot of praise for the team that responded to him. He said he was packaged up in under 10 minutes, loaded on our personnel carrier, and headed to surface very quickly.”



NOT A DRILL – Above, CGC Hagersville mine rescuers attend to a casualty during a recent training session. Below, CGC Hagersville’s competition mine rescue team following the 2016 Southern District Competition.



The biggest challenge encountered during the functional drill was “the amount of (manpower) resources used to run the scenario,” Horner said.

“We essentially shut down production from the mine for the majority of the day,” he explained. In addition, surface operations were curtailed because “there’s a lot of (mine rescue) volunteers from the different surface departments that are at our plant,” and once the drill was underway, contractors were sent home.

But “I think it was definitely a beneficial thing to do,” Horner said. The results underline the confidence in the mine’s emergency response plan, the quick response of all staff to the alarm, and the speed and quality of the mine rescue response.

And the drill indicated two areas for improvement.

“Our leaky feeder (radio) system is spread a little thin” over the expansive mine, he said. “The radio quality is something we’re looking to improve, so we have a solid communication line in the event of an emergency.”

And with so many mine rescue volunteers from surface operations, “we would definitely benefit from having some more specialized mine (familiarization) training for those volunteers.”

Horner is confident that the plant, which does two fire drills a year, will do more full-scale drills.

“I think the only way you can really test your mine rescue response, and test your procedures, and how it’s all going to work is by doing a real scenario.”

But he’s not going to share when the next one might happen.



NOT SO BIG? – A miner watches a continuous mining machine sweep at the face of Compass Minerals Goderich Mine. As machines cut multiple levels, the back or roof can grow to about 20 metres.

Mine becomes ‘Shawn’s playground’

Area equal to Goderich, 500 metres underground, 7 km under Lake Huron

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Compass Minerals’ Human Resources Business Partner Pat Moloney is “working with Penny on everything outside the mine” – banquet and social facilities, a venue for the MCQs, hotel rooms, and transportation, and “I’m responsible for everything at the mine,” Boutilier said.

“Right now my biggest worry is getting the video feed working” – a major challenge considering the expanse of what is billed as the largest salt mine in the world, more than 500 metres deep and extending seven kilometres under Lake Huron.

“Once we have that, I’ll just be working on the logistics.”

Chief Mine Rescue Officer Shawn Rideout has twice visited the mine, which covers an area roughly equal to the town of Goderich, and walked the mine, scouting for locations for the problem(s). Rideout has also been given maps, ventilation procedures, emergency response procedures, and more to plan the problem(s).

“He has quite a large area that is not in the production part of the mine,” said Boutilier, who calls that area “Shawn’s playground”.

“When we get closer to the time frame of the provincial, we’ll need to iron down details. Shawn will have some idea how long his problem is going to take, so we’ll know more about cage times,” as well as



SAFE TO CROSS – A drift in Compass Minerals Goderich Mine is more than wide enough for two-way heavy equipment traffic.

transportation of teams and judges to the mine and underground, orientation, feeding the judges and more.

‘UNDERGROUND GRAVEL PIT’

“I’m not sure if Shawn is going to make them (the teams) walk to the first problem, but they’ll get some exercise if he does. If they do walk, I think because of the size of the place, they’ll just be looking all around,” Boutilier said.

With room and pillar mining, backs or ceilings of 20 metres, and drifts just as wide, “it’s definitely going to be a different atmosphere for the hard rock miners,” he said. “They’re not going to be used to an excavation this large.”

But that doesn’t mean they will be any more disadvantaged than a team from an expansive salt mine competing in a confined hard rock mine, said Boutilier. Mine rescue teams from salt mines do not encounter ore passes, raises or ramps.

A salt mine “is a gravel pit underground, that’s basically what it is. That’s the best way to describe the Goderich Mine,” he said.

“The only advice I can give them is to be prepared for a challenging problem. It’s going to be outside the box for most of the teams, but they’ll walk away probably better mine rescue men and women because of it, as everyone does every year.”

Compass Minerals Goderich Mine on YouTube

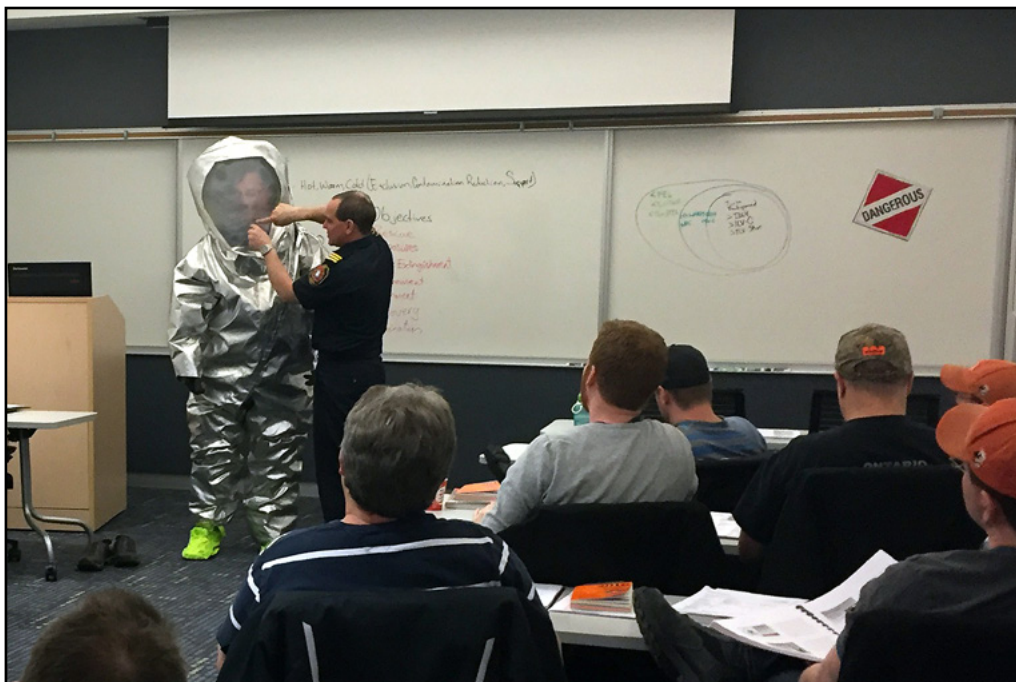
www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKIuj4n_8PQ&list=PLUqdI0vZkRNPZGgBOuB7TXwwmG-sj9HMZ

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Back to High School

Mine Rescue Officers Danny Taillefer, Shawn Shail, Jason Leger and Chief MRO Shawn Rideout recently made a presentation on Ontario Mine Rescue, and gave a hands-on demonstration of lifting bags and Hurst eDraulic tools to about 80 students at Timmins High & Vocational School. For Taillefer and Rideout, it was a homecoming, both are graduates.



Remember to Breathe

Mine Rescue Officers participate in a lesson on protective ensembles during a recent course on hazardous material emergency response, part of the ongoing training regime for MROs.

MRO shuffle in Sudbury, Onaping

Mine rescuers in the Sudbury and Onaping districts are saying hello, and goodbye to Mine Rescue Officers (MRO).

Gorden Sullivan and Dan Davidson have joined Ontario Mine Rescue, a part of Workplace Safety North, as MROs for both Sudbury and Onaping districts, while MROs Tim Ebbinghaus and John Hagan move on.



Gorden Sullivan

Sullivan joins OMR from Vale's Coleman Mine. He received his Introductory Mine Rescue training in 2011 while at Coleman, and has served as an active mine rescue volunteer since then.

Sullivan holds both Technician and Advanced Mine Rescue certifications, and has served as captain of Vale mine rescue teams during emergency operations.

Sullivan also participated as a member of the Vale West Mines competition mine rescue team, which competed at the 2013 Ontario Mine Rescue Provincial Competition, won the 2015 Provincial Competition, and earned bronze in the Theory and High Angle Rope Rescue events at the 2016 International Mine Rescue Competition.



Dan Davidson

Davidson, a former paramedic with Sudbury EMS, joins OMR from Glencore Sudbury Integrated Nickel Operations, where he served as Emergency Response Coordinator from 2008 to 2013. Davidson received his introductory training in 2010. He has served as a judge in district and provincial competitions since 2003.

Onaping District MRO John Hagan will begin his previously postponed retirement in July, but not before he marks his 30th anniversary with OMR in May.

Former Sudbury District MRO Tim Ebbinghaus, has been appointed Emergency Services Specialist based in Sudbury. Ebbinghaus, a mine rescue volunteer for 14 years with Canadian Salt Co. in Windsor, joined OMR in 2012 as the MRO for Thunder Bay/Algoma District.



TOP TWO – Left, Laurentian University mine rescuers review site maps during the 2017 Intercollegiate Mines Emergency Response Development competition in Golden, Colorado. Right, the University of British Columbia's mine rescue team gathers for a picture following the underground event. Laurentian and UBC finished first and second, respectively, during the competition.

Top finishes for OMR-trained students

Ontario Mine Rescue-trained student mine rescue teams swept the top two places in the 2017 Intercollegiate Mines Emergency Response Development (MERD) competition in Golden, Colorado.

Student teams from Laurentian University (LU) and the University of British Columbia (UBC) finished first and second respectively, in both the First Aid and Underground Scenario events, as well as first and second overall, ahead of university teams from the United States and Germany.

The Laurentian team from the Bharti School of Engineering was coached and mentored by Sudbury area mine rescuers, including Ontario Mine Rescue Officer (MRO) Tim Ebbinghaus, who volunteered their time with the Laurentian University Mine Rescue Club.

The club, established in 2015, is the first university mine rescue club in Ontario run by students. The team travelled to Colorado with limited experience, having only previously competed in the 2016 Ontario Mine Rescue (OMR) Sudbury District competition.

The UBC team, prior to the competition, attended a week-long training session coached by MRO Jason Leger. In 2015, a UBC team finished second in MERD, after visiting Ontario for a week-long training session with OMR volunteers.

Fresh off the MERD victory, Laurentian students earned runnerup honours, behind host University of Toronto, at the 2017 Canadian Mining Games, a competition between students of 10 Canadian universities with mine engineering programs.

The student-organized games, which includes a mine rescue event as one of 20 mining-related challenges, provides an opportunity for university mining students from across Canada to meet and test their mining knowledge, and their learning and adaptive capabilities.

OMR, at the request of the University of Toronto, partnered with the Northern Centre for Advanced Technology (NORCAT) and Draeger Safety Canada to design the mine rescue event.

During the event held in Toronto, students, under the watchful eye of MRO Dan Rulli, wore a BG4 breathing apparatus and navigated Draeger's smoke-filled, confined space training trailer.

Students, supervised by MRO Shawn Shail, also tested their underground firefighting knowledge using a computer simulation, provided by NORCAT.

The Intercollegiate MERD competition, held every two years, started in 2011, while the Canadian Mining Games, also held every two years, started in 1991. OMR last assisted with the Canadian Mining Games in 2007.



STUDENT GAMING – Left, a Laurentian University student uses a computer simulation to assess his knowledge of underground firefighting during the 2017 Canadian Mining Games in Toronto. Right, Laurentian University students prepare to enter a smoke-filled trailer to find their way through a confined space maze.



Who is That?

We know who they are, Thunder Bay District champions Renabie Gold Mines Ltd.'s mine rescue team at the 1988 Provincial Mine Rescue Competition held in Thunder Bay, but we don't know who is who. If you can identify members of the team, please email kensitter@workplacesafetynorth.ca.



Say, isn't that . . .

Thanks to Mike Simunovic, captain of the 1994 Royal Oak mine rescue team, for identifying his teammates, the Timmins District champions, at the 1994 Provincial Mine Rescue Competition in Kirkland Lake. Back row: Technician Jim Fleurie, #2 Dave Tomini, #3 Trevor Eagles, #4 Armand Massicotte, #6 Jack Lessard. Front row: Capt. Simunovic, briefing officer Jim Lauay, #5 Andy Cloutier. Most members of the 1994 team competed at the 1993 Provincial Mine Rescue Competition, and again at the 1995 competition.

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