Ventilation Hazards in Underground Mines

Workers in underground mines are at risk of developing occupational disease or suffering respiration-related death caused by ventilation hazards and exposure to diesel emissions.

In Ontario, about 18,000 people work in about 40 active underground mines.

Employers are responsible for controlling hazards in the workplace.

Employers, supervisors and workers have a number of duties under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and the Regulations for Mines and Mining Plants. Some of the duties include:

**Employers**
- develop and implement testing measures and procedures for diesel equipment, in consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) or health and safety representative
- provide test results, as required, to the JHSC or health and safety representative
- investigate overexposure to diesel emissions and take remedial action, if possible, to prevent future incidents
- take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect workers, including precautions to prevent hazards created by poor air quality in underground mines

**Supervisors**
- take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect workers, including precautions to prevent hazards created by poor air quality in underground mines
- ensure workers comply with the OHSA and its regulations
- ensure workers use any equipment, protective devices or clothing required by the employer
- advise workers of any potential or actual health and safety dangers that the supervisor knows about

**Workers**
- report to your supervisor or employer any ventilation hazards you know about as well as any violations of the OHSA and its regulations
- work in compliance with the OHSA and its regulations
- use any equipment, protective devices or clothing required by your employer
Compliance information
Ontario Ministry of Labour:
www.ontario.ca/MiningSafety

Guide to the Occupational Health and Safety Act:

Health & Safety Ontario:
http://healthandsafetyontario.ca

Regulations for Mines and Mining Plants:

Health and Safety Guideline for Testing of Undiluted Exhaust
(available from Ministry of Labour at (705) 670-5695)

Health and Safety Guideline for Sampling for Diesel Particulate Matter (DPM)
(available from Ministry of Labour at (705) 670-5695)

Toll-free number
Call 1-877-202-0008 any time to report critical injuries, fatalities or work refusals. Call between 8:30 a.m.
and 5 p.m., Monday to Friday for general inquiries about workplace health and safety. Always call 911
in an emergency.

Note: This document is not intended to replace the OHSA or the regulations and reference should always be
made to the official version of the legislation. It is the responsibility of the workplace parties to ensure compliance
with the legislation. This document does not constitute legal advice. To determine your rights and obligations
under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations, please contact your legal counsel or refer