



Link Line



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

Issue #14 May 2011

District MR Champions Head to Marathon

Kirkland Lake District

Team - Kirkland Lake Gold, Macassa Mine

Tech. - Jesse Vaillancourt, Northgate Minerals, Young-Davidson Mine

Onaping District

To Be Decided - May 12 & 13

Red Lake District

Team - Goldcorp Canada, Musselwhite Mine

Southern District

Team - CGC, Hagersville
Tech. - Drew Dalgleish, Compass Minerals

Sudbury District

To Be Decided - May 12 & 13

Thunder Bay/Algoma District

Team - Barrick Gold, Hemlo
Tech. - Denis Bilodeau, Barrick Gold, Hemlo

Timmins District

Team - Xstrata Copper, Kidd Mine
Tech. - Erik Barr, Goldcorp Canada, Porcupine Gold Mines



Ready to roll! The mine rescue team at Porcupine Gold Mine's Dome Mine has a substation that helps set a high standard for other mine operations to target.

Nothing Standard But High Standards

▶ The Handbook of Training in Mine Rescue and Recovery Operations sets out the requirements for a "Standard Mine Rescue Substation" at a mine site, but Ernie Gulliver knows there's standard, and there's those he really likes.

Two at the top of his "really like" list are the mine rescue substations at Porcupine Gold Mines' Dome Mine, and Xstrata Copper Canada's Kidd Mine, said Gulliver, a Mine Rescue Officer/Consultant for more than 20 years.

Both substations have extra working space, good storage capacity, are convenient for regular operations, training and emergencies, as well as easy to access, Gulliver said, and they are consistently well maintained.

"This substation is significantly larger than the other substations I've been in, another 50 per cent bigger," said Erik Barr, senior underground geologist at Dome, who maintains that mine's substation as part of his duties as mine rescue technician.

Please see 'The Minute' on Pg. 3

We need you!

If you have comments about the newsletter, or suggestions for future articles, please contact Susan Haldane at WSN, (705) 474-7233 ext. 261, or susanhaldane@workplacesafetynorth.ca



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Knowing the value of being prepared

Ex-TAC chair steps down but not away

▶ Joe Wojtus is not someone who needs to be faced with an emergency before he appreciates the value of being prepared for an emergency.

A mine rescue volunteer since he was trained in 1980 while working at the Macassa Mine for Lac Minerals Ltd., Wojtus recently stepped down from the Mine Rescue Technical Advisory Committee ending a 10-year term on the committee.

But after 30 years Wojtus hasn't stepped away from his belief in emergency preparedness, or his plans to continue to contribute to mine rescue.

"I'm judging the district mine rescue competition in May, and I'll be judging the provincial competition in Marathon in June," said the general mine foreman with Northgate Minerals' Young-Davidson project near Matachewan.

Wojtus, who served three years as the TAC's first chair after its creation in 2001, stepped down because of work demands at the project which is scheduled to shift into production late next year.

"I missed three meetings last year," said the mine rescue veteran, whose TAC attendance is as near perfect as his attendance at provincial mine competitions – he's only missed two in 30 years.

EYE OPENER

The TAC was created when responsibility for mine rescue was transferred from the Ontario Ministry of Labour to the Mines and Aggregates Safety and Health Association. The committee's purpose is to promote the continual improvement of emergency preparedness of Ontario mines by identifying issues, providing advice and making recommendations.

"It just opened my eyes a whole lot," Wojtus said, of his appointment to the committee, particularly that there were



Thanks Joe! Joe Wojtus accepts a plaque recognizing his years of service on Ontario Mine Rescue's Technical Advisory Committee from Candys Ballanger-Michaud, president and chief executive officer of Workplace Safety North.

people who lacked an appreciation of the value of emergency preparedness. The TAC, however, and the mine rescue staff and volunteers with whom it works, reinforce his own beliefs in safety.

"I met a lot of good people. They are near and dear to my heart," he said. "I love the camaraderie, because we all have the same common goal."

Originally TAC activities were more reactive than proactive due to the necessity of reviewing and upgrading mine rescue equipment, particularly the BG174 breathing apparatus which Draeger Safety had decided it would no longer support with spare parts.

"Our backs were to the wall on that," Wojtus said. Time was limited to review the situation, develop options, make a decision and implement that decision. And the BG174 was not the only piece of equipment that needed to be examined.

"We were just thrown into it like wolves back then," said Wojtus recalling some of the equipment – flame lamp, SSR 90, Type N respirator, Scott Air Pak – that had to be reviewed and assessed, and often replaced.

"Those were tough choices."

Please see "Committee" on Pg. 4

Mine Rescue TAC Members

Tim Maloney, Vale, Chair
Markus Uchtenhagen,
Goldcorp, Vice Chair
Charlie Burton, Mine Rescue
Dan Demers, Northgate
Minerals
Mike Dudar, Vale
Alex Gryska, Mine Rescue
Bruce Hall, Mine Rescue
Emmett Houston, DMC
Mining
Bob Leblanc, Lake Shore
Gold
Daniel Murphy, Xstrata
Nickel
Doug Osborne, Windsor Salt
Scotty Robertson, Ministry
of Labour
Gilbert Wahl, Wesdome

'The minute we roll in, we're ready'



Dome's spacious mine rescue substation gives mine rescuers plenty of extra space for cupboards, tabletop work areas, men and even a seldom-used pool table that is used mainly as another work surface.



Kidd Mine's recently refurbished mine rescue substation is slightly smaller than Dome's, but still has "lots of space and lots of cupboards" for men and equipment, said Randy Watt.



Easy access to vehicles and the mine, an adjacent office for the briefing officer, and a full stock of supplies also help to make a mine rescue substation emergency ready.

More than extra space to an excellent substation

Continued from page 1

The building housing the substation was constructed in 1995, and the substation area was designed with rescue services for Dome's underground and open pit operations in mind.

"It housed everything for both operations," Barr said, but the mine no longer has an open pit operation, leaving Dome's mine rescue teams with a spacious legacy.

In fact, at 32 feet by 26 feet, 832 sq. ft., the substation is almost twice the size of the minimum 18 by 24, 432 sq. ft., set out in the Handbook, and the additional space is space well used, he said.

The substation has an entire wall of floor-to-ceiling cabinets with two levels, and the six-man long, double-width table island has cabinets underneath containing the standard equipment for each man.

"Basically, they step forward, open the door, and there's the equipment they are responsible for," he explained. "Everything is set up, so that the minute we roll in, we're ready to go."

Though the substation is only equipped with six BG4s, the island is large enough to accommodate a dozen rescuers working on breathing apparatus and "they won't be tripping over each other," said Barr, winner of the 2010 Provincial Mine Rescue technician competition.

Kidd's substation is slightly smaller than Dome's, but "we've got a pretty big room," said Randy Watt, Kidd's mine rescue and emergency co-ordinator. His recently spruced up substation is 30 feet by 21, 630 sq. ft., with "lots of space and lots of cupboards."

EMERGENCY READY

"It can accommodate a good size team and have lots of room for several technicians to be working on equipment," said Watt, who supervised changes to the room that included fresh paint, new cupboards with sliders for the BG4s, and installing electrical outlets on the island and cupboards underneath for gear.

"It's emergency ready for sure," said Watt, explaining the changes were just "a little brush up".

In addition to lots of space for mine rescue men and equipment, the two substations share other features. Both have direct vehicle access for equipment and supplies in all weather conditions, both are on basement level allowing quick and easy access to the mine, and both have adjacent rooms that can be used by briefing officers.

"It's nice and quiet in there for him," said Watt, and the room is equipped with two-way radio, telephone, and a computer enabling communications with the control group and teams underground and waiting in the substation.

Maintaining the substation is part of Watt's full-time job, while Barr estimates he might spend five or 10 minutes a day checking on the room, supplies and equipment, more if training is underway.

Please see 'Constant' on Pg. 4



Joe Wojtus

Committee focus evolved to proactive

Continued from page 2

As urgent needs were addressed, the focus of the TAC has evolved, becoming more proactive in looking for improvements to emergency preparedness, he said.

The committee has helped develop and promote the use of point-in-time evaluations to give mine operators a truer assessment of their response capability, and mutual aid agreements to encourage operations to effectively share resources.

“Everyone needs to be on the same wavelength,” said Wojtus, who encourages operators to put those agreements to good use with cross-training exercises.

“A lot of focus is on that (training) because you’re never really prepared for an emergency.”

“The thing the committee faces right now is heat stress, deeper mines, hotter mines,” said Wojtus, who doesn’t believe Ontario Mine Rescue or the mining industry can wait for an incident to occur to learn how to prevent or handle heat stress.

Two years ago Ontario Mine Rescue under the guidance of the TAC prepared a training module on heat stress. The committee continues to monitor heat stress research by the University of Ottawa for mine rescue, and plans to review a health and safety report currently being written on the topic.

“The bottom line is saving lives,” Wojtus said.

Constant monitoring keeps mines prepared

Continued from page 3

“It’s not a lot of time, but you’ve got to keep at it,” Barr said. “We’ll fix things right away.”

Both credit the Timmins mine rescue officers with making it easy to keep stocked.

“It’s not a challenge. If I ask for something, I get it pretty quick,” said Barr, noting that the Timmins station, which moved to South Porcupine several years ago, is only a five-minute drive making stockkeeping an easier task than for most substations.

Kidd’s substation is used solely by mine rescue, a situation that Gulliver prefers, while the Dome substation is also used for first aid training though that hasn’t been a problem, Barr said.

“We also have the ability to expand into the basement if required during training or an emergency.”

The basement area, which is adjacent to the dry, provides a hot, humid training area, he said, a useful facility for mine rescuers who work in one of the deepest and hottest mines in Ontario.

A UNIQUE PERK

“Sometimes lying on the ground there (as a training casualty), I start to sweat,” Barr said.

Dome also has a perk that Kidd lacks – a pool table.

“It was donated by the mine’s union, U.S.W.A. #7580,” Barr said, “and is there to keep the teams occupied while they wait during an emergency.” Covered with a sheet of plywood, the table rarely sees duty as a pool table, but regularly serves as an additional worktable.

Watt doesn’t plan to add a pool table at Kidd, but is working to copy Dome’s practice of placing photos of its provincial competition teams on the walls.

“We want to recognize and support the sense of pride mine rescuers have for the work they do,” said Watt, who is searching for old photos of mine rescue at Kidd.

“Rookies can already see what mine

Substation standards

The Handbook of Training In Mine Rescue and Recovery Operations sets the minimum standards required by a mine rescue substation.

The standards include:

- a room at least 18 feet by 24 feet;
- on the ground floor with outside access so the mine rescue vehicle can be driven to the door;
- temperature must be moderate in all seasons;
- must be lockable and secure;
- secure storage for oxygen cascade system and spare cylinders;
- storage for six to 16 Draeger BG4 apparatus and other equipment;
- have proper washing and disinfecting facilities;
- a drying rack or air drying system;
- strong, durable tables that can accommodate six men field testing equipment and large enough to hold 12 sets of apparatus;
- stacking chairs for classroom work, as well as a blackboard or whiteboard, and a cork or bulletin board; and
- convenient and easily accessible storage.

rescue is about and how important it is from the pictures,” Barr said. The mine is 100 years old and mine rescue has been around for most of those years.

Watt said the age of the Timmins area mines – Kidd has “been operating for 40 years” – gives them and their substations a bit of an edge.

“The new mines starting out lack facilities,” he said, noting that time and experience have their benefits.

But Gulliver said Dome and Kidd give newer mines a higher standard to target when it comes to a standard substation.



Australian mine rescuers compete at the seventh International Mine Rescue Competition last year in Wollongong, Australia.

Time to start training

Planning is now underway on the eighth International Mine Rescue Competition to be hosted by the Ukraine.

Details have yet to be finalized, but the competition will be held in August/September 2012 in Donetsk, a city of 1.5 million in southeastern Ukraine, and home to more than a dozen coal mines,

some of which are located under the city.

Sixteen teams representing seven countries competed at the seventh international competition last November in Wollongong, Australia, which was won by a team from New South Wales.

Poland has been selected as the host for the ninth competition in 2014.

China to host IMRB meeting

Beijing, China, will host the fifth International Mine Rescue Conference Oct. 22 to 26, this year, while Canadian mine rescue organizations are tentatively scheduled to host the 2013 conference.

More than 25 nations, some represented by more than one mine rescue organization attended the last conference organized by the International Mine Rescue Body in 2009 in the Czech Republic. Canada was represented by Ontario Mine Rescue, and mine rescue organizations from Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

The IMRB was created in 2001 to promote mine rescue at an international level and to improve mine rescue

knowledge and practices by supporting innovation and global cooperation.

Topics for the Beijing conference include Emergency Management Group and Mine Rescue Team Structure; Operating Procedures and Deployment; Emergency Rescue Equipment and Technology; Emergency Management Planning, Drills and Simulations; Rescue Case Studies and Analysis; and International Exchange and Cooperation on Emergency Management.

Additional information about this year's conference can be found at www.minerescue.org/conferences. Presentations from previous conferences can also be found at the IMRB website.

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