



Mine Safety and Health

The U.S. Labor Department's Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) helps to reduce deaths, injuries, and illnesses in the nation's mines with a variety of activities and programs. The agency develops and enforces safety and health rules applying to all U.S. mines, helps mine operators who have special compliance problems, and makes available technical, educational and other types of assistance. MSHA works cooperatively with industry, labor, and other Federal and state agencies toward improving safety and health conditions for all miners. MSHA's responsibilities are spelled out in the [Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977](#).

Coverage

The 1977 Mine Act applies to all mining and mineral processing operations in the United States, **regardless of size, number of employees, or method of extraction**. Thus MSHA covers two-person sand and gravel pits as well as large underground coal mines and processing plants.

Organizational Structure

MSHA was created in 1978, when the 1977 Act transferred the Federal mine safety program from the Department of the Interior to the Department of Labor. MSHA is headed by an Assistant Secretary of Labor. Compliance assistance, enforcement of safety and health rules and other responsibilities are carried out by:

- Coal Mine Safety and Health which conducts its mine inspection, investigation and training programs through 11 district offices and a system of subordinate offices in the nation's coal mining regions.
- Metal and Nonmetal Mine Safety and Health which administers its programs for all non-coal mines through six district offices in mining areas throughout the United States.
- Educational Policy and Development administers the agency's training programs.

- Technical Support provides engineering and scientific expertise to assist MSHA, the states, and the mining industry in the resolution of safety and health issues.
- Program Evaluation & Information Resources collects, analyzes and reports on health and safety data, and is responsible for support and training for all MSHA automated information systems, data communications networks and ADP equipment.

MSHA helps to facilitate compliance with the Mine Act through training, technical assistance and other activities. These include:

- maintaining the National Mine Health and Safety Academy to train MSHA and mining industry personnel
- providing technical assistance to mine operators in improving their education and training programs
- providing technical support on solving safety and health problems
- cooperating with states in the development of mine safety and health programs
- making grants to states for education and training
- providing technical assistance in mine emergencies
- approving equipment for use in mines.

For more information on MSHA, contact:

- Office of Information and Public Affairs, MSHA Headquarters, Arlington, VA, (202) 693-9400; or

Your local MSHA office. (Check your local phone book, under "U.S. Government") You may reach MSHA via the Internet at <http://www.msha.gov>. For Headquarters, Regional and District offices click on <http://www.msha.gov/contactmsha/contactmsha.htm>.