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Twenty-six Virginia Coal Mines, Seventeen Miners Receive Safety Awards *Awards Recognize Achievements in Hours Worked with no Lost Time Accidents*

Big Stone Gap, VA – Twenty-three Virginia coal mines worked a combined total of 1.8 million employee hours without a lost time accident in 2011. Three mines and 17 coal mine employees from various companies have worked a combined total of 405 years without missing a day of work due to an accident. All of these mines and miners were recognized recently for their extraordinary safety achievements with awards presented by the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) on behalf of the Virginia Mine Safety Board.

“We are very pleased to call attention to efforts made by these companies and their employees to accomplish such a significant safety record,” said DMME Director Conrad Spangler. “A series of tragic mine disasters in the last six years have shaken an industry that has made substantial progress in safety improvements over the years due to improved training and technology. These awards demonstrate the commitment of the companies and individual miners to promoting and maintaining a safe work environment in an effort to prevent future accidents and loss of life.”

Four mines took first place honors in the following categories:

- **Big Laurel Coal Corporation, Mine No. 2**, Wise County – 1st Place Large Underground Category, NFDL (Non Fatal Days Lost) rate of 0 for 173,977 employee hours.
- **Dominion Coal Corporation, Mine No. 26** – Buchanan County – 1st Place Small Underground Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 98,443 employee hours.
- **Extra Energy, Virginia Point No. 1 Surface** – Tazewell County – 1st Place Large Surface Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 277,666 employee hours.
- **Twin State Mining Inc., Highwall Miner #3** – Buchanan County – 1st Place Small Surface Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 40,915 employee hours.

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- A special award was presented to **Dominion Coal Corporation, Dominion Central Shop** – Buchanan County – Accident Free for 10 Consecutive Years.
- **Rickey B. Fuller, Extra Energy** received an individual award for working 36 years without a lost time accident.

**** (Editor – See additional awards in all categories on pages two through four.)**

DMME Deputy Director Butch Lambert, DMME Division of Mines Chief Randy Moore visited the winning mines and their employees to present the safety awards over the last two weeks. Division of Mines safety staff and field inspectors and supervisors also participated in the presentations in recognition of each company and each miner’s achievement.

The safety awards are given annually by the DMME on behalf of the Virginia Mine Safety Board. The Board is appointed by the Governor to advise DMME on matters relating to the health and safety of persons working in Virginia’s coal industry. It is also designated as the official regulatory work committee for DMME on all coal mine health and safety regulations not under the jurisdiction of the Board of Coal Mining Examiners which addresses certification of workers.

****Additional Awards Presented in All Categories**

Company Awards Large Underground

Paramont Coal Company Virginia, LLC, Deep Mine # 35, Wise County – **2nd Place** Large Underground Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 144,669 employee hours

Bluff Spur Coal Corporation, Mine No. 1, Wise County – **3rd Place** Large Underground Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 136,939 employee hours

Company Awards Small Underground

Dickenson Russell Coal Company, LLC, Roaring Fork #4 – Dickenson County – **2nd Place** Small Underground Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 80,526 employee hours

AB&J Coal Company, Inc., No. 6 – Buchanan County – **3rd Place** Small Underground Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 42,082 employee hours

SANW, Inc., SANW Mine #1 – Buchanan County – **4th Place** Small Underground Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 37,548 employee hours

Capital Coal Corporation, No. 8 – Dickenson County – **5th Place** Small Underground Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 27,400 employee hours

Calico Coal Inc., Meredian #2 – Buchanan County – **6th Place** Small Underground Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 25,275 employee hours

SANW, Inc., SANW Mine #3 – Buchanan County – **7th Place** Small Underground Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 24,067 employee hours

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Company Awards Large Surface

Clintwood Elkhorn Mining Company, Laurel Branch Surface – Buchanan County – **2nd Place** Large Surface Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 181,120 employee hours

Paramont Coal Company Virginia, LLC, 88 Strip – Dickenson County – **3rd Place** Large Surface Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 153,209 employee hours

Jewell Smokeless Coal Corporation, Coronet Jewell Prep Plant No. 2 – Buchanan County – **4th Place** Large Surface Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 134,367 employee hours

Paramont Coal Company Virginia, LLC, Red Onion Surface – Wise County – **3rd Place** Large Surface Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 153,209 employee hours

Company Awards Small Surface

Paramont Coal Company Virginia, LLC, Lover’s Gap #4 – Buchanan County – **2nd Place** Small Surface Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 40,574 employee hours

Bundy Auger Mining, Inc., Highwall Miner #1 – Russell County – **3rd Place** Small Surface Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 40,508 employee hours

Harold Keene Coal Co., Inc., Flat Rock Surface – Russell County – **4th Place** Small Surface Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 38,155 employee hours

Dominion Coal Corporation, Dominion Central Shop – Buchanan County – **5th Place** Small Surface Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 36,834 employee hours

Clintwood Elkhorn Mining Company, Cedar Branch #1 – Buchanan County – **6th Place** Small Surface Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 29,066 employee hours

Harold Keene Coal Co. Inc., Flat Rock Preparation Plant – Russell County – **7th Place** Small Surface Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 27,841 employee hours

Paramont Coal Company Virginia, LLC, Butcherknife Surface – Buchanan County – **8th Place** Small Surface Category, NFDL rate of 0 for 11,591 employee hours

Special Awards

Calico Coal Inc., Meridian #2 - Buchanan County – Accident Free for 7 Consecutive Years

AB&J Coal Company, Inc., No. 6 - Buchanan County Accident Free for 5 Consecutive Years

Individual Awards

Johnny D. Hatfield, Clintwood Elkhorn Mining, Inc. – 34 years with no lost time accident

Ralph Campbell, Jr., SANW, Inc. – 32 years with no lost time accident

Jim Blankenship, Clintwood Elkhorn Mining, Inc. – 32 years with no lost time accident

Timmy A. Elswick, Clintwood Elkhorn Mining, Inc. – 31 years with no lost time accident

Randy R. Keen, Calico Coal, Inc. – 30 years with no lost time accident

Larry Honaker, Jewell Smokeless Coal Corporation – 30 years with no lost time accident

Daniel L. Smith, SANW, Inc. – 30 years with no lost time accident

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Phillip Hale, Extra Energy – 25 years with no lost time accident
Jerry A. Varney, Calico Coal, Inc. – 20 years with no lost time accident
William R. Rasnake, Calico Coal, Inc. – 20 years with no lost time accident
Dennis R. Blankenship, Clintwood Elkhorn Mining, Inc. – 13 years with no lost time accident
Brian Maggard, Calico Coal, Inc. – 10 years with no lost time accident
Donnie L. Hess, Calico Coal, Inc. – 10 years with no lost time accident
Ronald Stacy, Clintwood Elkhorn Mining, Inc. – 10 years with no lost time accident
Danny W. Matney, Clintwood Elkhorn Mining, Inc. – 10 years with no lost time accident
Chris Chafin, Clintwood Elkhorn Mining, Inc. – 10 years with no lost time accident

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