



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

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Wellmore Coal Company's Team Takes Home Virginia Governor's Cup at 38th Mine Rescue and Safety Competition

Wise, VA – Wellmore Coal Company's Mine Rescue team took top honors in the 38th annual Virginia Governor's Cup Mine Rescue and Safety Contest held May 31st and June 1st at the University of Virginia's College at Wise. The rescue and safety contests serve as invaluable training to teams and individuals that compete. The contest is hosted by the Metallurgical Coal Producers Association (MCPA) and the Virginia Department of Energy (Virginia Energy)

"Virginia has an impeccable safety record that the entire coal industry can be proud of," **said Virginia Energy Director of Coal Programs Randy Moore.** "However, we remain vigilant. These teams are always preparing to respond. Those competing for the Governor's Cup are impressive first responders and coal miners. We are thankful for their willingness to be ready to help in an emergency."

The last major mine emergency in which mine rescue team responded was in 2003. Teams have been used to explore mines for reopening or after fires since that time.

The mine rescue teams competed to conduct rescue and recovery operations in a staged mine disaster scenario laid out in the university's David J. Prior Convocation Center. Team members donned full mine rescue gear, including oxygen breathing apparatus, to determine underground mine conditions, construct ventilation controls and locate and extract accident "victims".

The teams were judged on their thoroughness in recording mine conditions on a map as they advanced into the “mine” and their ability to identify and respond to hazards that could endanger the team or trapped miners.

Individual coal miners also competed in the bench and preshift competitions. The preshift competition is designed for mine foreman. They are judged on their ability to identify hazardous conditions and take corrective action. Mine foremen do this check before the beginning of each shift to ensure the safety of their crews.

The bench competition has miners looking for problems in the breathing apparatus their team uses to go underground in situations where oxygen is limited. Competitors need to quickly identify discrepancies that could put their teammates at risk if it causes the apparatuses to not properly function.

Virginia Governor’s Cup: Wellmore Coal Company

2nd Place Team: Paramount Contura

Bench 1st Place: TimTurner, Inmet Mining

Bench 2nd Place: Casey Mooneyhan, Paramount Contura

Pre-Shift: Joey Sykes, Paramount Contura

2nd Place: Brian Keith, Paramount Contura

Virginia Governor’s Cup Teams: Wellmore Coal Company, Coronado Coal Company, Paramount Contura, Virginia Small Operators Mine Rescue, Inmet Mining, LLC, Alden Resources and JRL Coal

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