

on the affected fan automatically close.

[61 FR 9829, Mar. 11, 1996, as amended at 61 FR 20877, May 8, 1996]

§ 75.311 Main mine fan operation.

(a) Main mine fans shall be continuously operated, except as otherwise approved in the ventilation plan, or when intentionally stopped for testing of automatic closing doors and automatic fan signal devices, maintenance or adjustment of the fan, or to perform maintenance or repair work underground that cannot otherwise be made while the fan is operating.

(b) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, when a main mine fan is intentionally stopped and the ventilating quantity provided by the fan is not maintained by a back-up fan system—

(1) Only persons necessary to evaluate the effect of the fan stoppage or restart, or to perform maintenance or repair work that cannot otherwise be made while the fan is operating, shall be permitted underground;

(2) Mechanized equipment shall be shut off before stopping the fan; and

(3) Electric power circuits entering underground areas of the mine shall be deenergized.

(c) When a back-up fan system is used that does not provide the ventilating quantity provided by the main mine fan, persons may be permitted in the mine and electric power circuits may be energized as specified in the approved ventilation plan.

(d) If an unusual variance in the mine ventilation pressure is observed, or if an electrical or mechanical deficiency of a main mine fan is detected, the mine foreman or equivalent mine official, or in the absence of the mine foreman or equivalent mine official, a designated certified person acting for the mine foreman or equivalent mine official shall be notified immediately, and appropriate action or repairs shall be instituted promptly.

(e) While persons are underground, a responsible person designated by the operator shall always be at a surface location where each main mine fan signal can be seen or heard.

(f) The area within 100 feet of main mine fans and intake air openings shall

be kept free of combustible material, unless alternative precautions necessary to provide protection from fire or other products of combustion are approved in the ventilation plan.

(g) If multiple mine fans are used, the mine ventilation system shall be designed and maintained to eliminate areas without air movement.

(h) Any atmospheric monitoring system operated during fan stoppages shall be intrinsically safe.

§ 75.312 Main mine fan examinations and records.

(a) To assure electrical and mechanical reliability of main mine fans, each main mine fan and its associated components, including devices for measuring or recording mine ventilation pressure, shall be examined for proper operation by a trained person designated by the operator. Examinations of main mine fans shall be made at least once each day that the fan operates, unless a fan monitoring system is used. No examination is required on any day when no one, including certified persons, goes underground, except that an examination shall be completed prior to anyone entering the mine.

(b)(1) If a main mine fan monitoring system is used, a trained person designated by the operator shall—

(i) At least once each day review the data provided by the fan monitoring system to assure that the fan and the fan monitoring system are operating properly. No review is required on any day when no one, including certified persons, goes underground, except that a review of the data shall be performed prior to anyone entering the underground portion of the mine. Data reviewed should include the fan pressure, bearing temperature, revolutions per minute, vibration, electric voltage, and amperage; and

(ii) At least every 7 days—

(A) Test the monitoring system for proper operation; and

(B) Examine each main mine fan and its associated components to assure electrical and mechanical reliability of main mine fans.

(2) If the monitoring system malfunctions, the malfunction shall be corrected, or paragraph (a) of this section shall apply.

(c) At least every 31 days, the automatic fan signal device for each main mine fan shall be tested by stopping the fan. Only persons necessary to evaluate the effect of the fan stoppage or restart, or to perform maintenance or repair work that cannot otherwise be made while the fan is operating, shall be permitted underground. Notwithstanding the requirement of § 75.311(b)(3), underground power may remain energized during this test provided no one, including persons identified in § 75.311(b)(1), is underground. If the fan is not restarted within 15 minutes, underground power shall be deenergized and no one shall enter any underground area of the mine until the fan is restarted and an examination of the mine is conducted as described in § 75.360 (b) through (e) and the mine has been determined to be safe.

(d) At least every 31 days, the automatic closing doors in multiple main mine fan systems shall be tested by stopping the fan. Only persons necessary to evaluate the effect of the fan stoppage or restart, or to perform maintenance or repair work that cannot otherwise be made while the fan is operating, shall be permitted underground. Notwithstanding the provisions of § 75.311, underground power may remain energized during this test provided no one, including persons identified in § 75.311(b)(1), is underground. If the fan is not restarted within 15 minutes, underground power shall be deenergized and no one shall enter any underground area of the mine, until the fan is restarted and an examination of the mine is conducted as described in § 75.360 (b) through (e) and the mine has been determined to be safe.

(e) Circular main mine fan pressure recording charts shall be changed before the beginning of a second revolution.

(f)(1) *Certification.* Persons making main mine fan examinations shall certify by initials and date at the fan or another location specified by the operator that the examinations were made.

Each certification shall identify the main mine fan examined.

(2) Persons reviewing data produced by a main mine fan monitoring system shall certify by initials and date on a printed copy of the data from the system that the review was completed. In lieu of certification on a copy of the data, the person reviewing the data may certify electronically that the review was completed. Electronic certification shall be by handwritten initials and date in a computer system so as to be secure and not susceptible to alteration.

(g)(1) *Recordkeeping.* By the end of the shift on which the examination is made, persons making main mine fan examinations shall record all uncorrected defects that may affect the operation of the fan that are not corrected by the end of that shift. Records shall be maintained in a secure book that is not susceptible to alteration or electronically in a computer system so as to be secure and not susceptible to alteration.

(2) When a fan monitoring system is used in lieu of the daily fan examination—

(i) The certified copies of data produced by fan monitoring systems shall be maintained separate from other computer-generated reports or data; and

(ii) A record shall be made of any fan monitoring system malfunctions, electrical or mechanical deficiencies in the monitoring system and any sudden increase or loss in mine ventilating pressure. The record shall be made by the end of the shift on which the review of the data is completed and shall be maintained in a secure book that is not susceptible to alteration or electronically in a computer system so as to be secure and not susceptible to alteration.

(3) By the end of the shift on which the monthly test of the automatic fan signal device or the automatic closing doors is completed, persons making these tests shall record the results of the tests. Records shall be maintained in a secure book that is not susceptible to alteration or electronically in a computer system so as to be secure and not susceptible to alteration.

(h) *Retention period.* Records, including records of mine fan pressure and the certified copies of data produced by fan monitoring systems, shall be retained at a surface location at the mine for at least 1 year and shall be made available for inspection by authorized representatives of the Secretary and the representative of miners.

§ 75.313 Main mine fan stoppage with persons underground.

(a) If a main mine fan stops while anyone is underground and the ventilating quantity provided by the fan is not maintained by a back-up fan system—

(1) Electrically powered equipment in each working section shall be deenergized;

(2) Other mechanized equipment in each working section shall be shut off; and

(3) Everyone shall be withdrawn from the working sections and areas where mechanized mining equipment is being installed or removed.

(b) If ventilation is restored within 15 minutes after a main mine fan stops, certified persons shall examine for methane in the working places and in other areas where methane is likely to accumulate before work is resumed and before equipment is energized or restarted in these areas.

(c) If ventilation is not restored within 15 minutes after a main mine fan stops—

(1) Everyone shall be withdrawn from the mine;

(2) Underground electric power circuits shall be deenergized. However, circuits necessary to withdraw persons from the mine need not be deenergized if located in areas or haulageways where methane is not likely to migrate to or accumulate. These circuits shall be deenergized as persons are withdrawn; and

(3) Mechanized equipment not located on working sections shall be shut off. However, mechanized equipment necessary to withdraw persons from the mine need not be shut off if located in areas where methane is not likely to migrate to or accumulate.

(d)(1) When ventilation is restored—

(i) No one other than designated certified examiners shall enter any underground area of the mine until an examination is conducted as described in § 75.360(b) through (e) and the area has been determined to be safe. Designated certified examiners shall enter the underground area of the mine from which miners have been withdrawn only after the fan has operated for at least 15 minutes unless a longer period of time is specified in the approved ventilation plan.

(ii) Underground power circuits shall not be energized and nonpermissible mechanized equipment shall not be started or operated in an area until an examination is conducted as described in § 75.360(b) through (e) and the area has been determined to be safe, except that designated certified examiners may use nonpermissible transportation equipment in intake airways to facilitate the making of the required examination.

(2) If ventilation is restored to the mine before miners reach the surface, the miners may return to underground working areas only after an examination of the areas is made by a certified person and the areas are determined to be safe.

(e) Any atmospheric monitoring system operated during fan stoppages shall be intrinsically safe.

(f) Any electrical refuge alternative components exposed to the mine atmosphere shall be approved as intrinsically safe for use during fan stoppages. Any electrical refuge alternative components located inside the refuge alternative shall be either approved as intrinsically safe or approved as permissible for use during fan stoppages.

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§ 75.320 Air quality detectors and measurement devices.

(a) Tests for methane shall be made by a qualified person with MSHA approved detectors that are maintained in permissible and proper operating condition and calibrated with a known methane-air mixture at least once every 31 days.

(b) Tests for oxygen deficiency shall be made by a qualified person with MSHA approved oxygen detectors that