

Arch Coal's Leer Mine Honored with 2016 Coal Sector Innovation Award

October 3, 2016 3:57 PM ET

ST LOUIS, October 3, 2016 – Arch Coal, Inc. announced today that its Tygart Valley Leer mining complex located in Taylor County, W.Va., received the 2016 Technology Innovation Award in the coal sector. The award, presented by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), recognizes Leer mine's innovative stockpile safety system.

The presentation was made by Dr. Jessica Kogel, NIOSH Associate Director for Mining, at a luncheon in conjunction with the MinExpo International 2016.

“Operating safely is one of Arch Coal's long-standing core values,” said John W. Eaves, Arch's chief executive officer. “I am very proud of all of our employees who actively seek ways to improve our safety performance. Using technology as a tool to aid in reducing potential incidents is a new frontier in coal mining, and we want to be on the forefront of that exploration. Congratulations to everyone who participated in developing this innovative system.”

According to the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), there were seven dozers involved in stockpile incidents in 2015. Most of the incidents involved a dozer falling into a hidden cavity. Leer's safety stockpile system is designed to help dozer and feeder operators identify and avoid these potential cavities.

“The safety of workers that operate dozers on surface stockpiles at mine sites depends on knowing where feeder locations are, and if material is feeding properly,” explained Doug Conaway, Arch's vice president of safety. “To reduce the potential for stockpile incidents, Leer mine developed a stockpile safety system that provides the dozer operator and the plant operator with video of the dozer location on the coal stockpile in relation to the feeders.

“An audible warning is provided if the dozer enters a zone above the feeder that is determined to be unsafe,” he continued. “In addition, the operators can confirm from the video that the coal is being pulled properly from the surface of the stockpile to indicate there are not any voids. This system represents a big step forward in dozer operator awareness; a step that we believe will help eliminate future incidents.”

NIOSH instituted its Mine Safety and Health Technology Innovation Awards to recognize mines and companies that have made an extraordinary effort to apply technologies in ways that will improve mine worker safety or health.

“An important goal of the MINER Act of 2006 was to encourage the development, adaptation and application of technology to improve safety and health in the mining industry, and one of our goals in creating this award is to identify and showcase innovations in the industry,” said Dr. Kogel. “The creative work your company did to develop the stockpile safety system to reduce the potential of stockpile incidents is a wonderful example of this endeavor. I sincerely congratulate Arch Coal for taking this extra effort to innovate in such a positive way.”

U.S.-based Arch Coal, Inc. is a top coal producer for the global steel and power generation industries, reliably serving customers worldwide. Its network of large-scale, low-cost mining complexes and high-quality metallurgical and thermal reserves are located in the most strategic coal supply basins in the United States. For more information, visit www.archcoal.com.