

Rig Worker Dies in Accident at Coal Mine Prep Plant

FAIRVIEW, W.Va. (AP) — Federal regulators said Tuesday they were working with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to decide who has jurisdiction over a fatal accident involving a gas-drilling rig at a coal mine prep plant.

An unidentified worker died Monday night when the rig overturned and crushed him at CONSOL Energy's Loveridge Mine preparation plant in Fairview, W.VA., said Mine Safety and Health Administration spokesman Jesse Lawder.

The rig was doing exploratory work on Marcellus shale gas deposits, he said, drilling 30-foot holes and setting off explosives for seismic testing.

The state Office of Miners' Health Safety and Training said it has turned the case over to OSHA because the accident didn't occur on bonded mine property.

Pennsylvania-based CONSOL, meanwhile, said it's cooperating with the federal agencies.

CONSOL had given Seitel Inc. access to its property, and the Texas-based company had obtained the necessary permits, said spokeswoman Lynn Seay.

"The independent testing was not associated with CONSOL Energy's active coal mining or gas operations," she said.

Seitel officials referred questions about the accident to Omni Energy Services Corp. in Lafayette, La. A spokesman there didn't immediately return a telephone message.

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