



*Office of the United States Attorney
Eastern District of Kentucky
Kerry B. Harvey, United States Attorney*

Coal Mine Operator Sentenced for Safety Violations

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For information contact

Kyle Edelen (859) 685-4811

E-Mail: Kyle.Edelen@usdoj.gov

PIKEVILLE — A coal mine operator was sentenced today for violating the mandatory safety standards for underground coal mines set forth by the Federal Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA).

A U.S. District Court Judge in Pikeville sentenced 57-year-old Alger B. Jent of Kite, Ky. to probation. Under the conditions of probation, Jent will not be allowed to own or operate a mine for at least two years.

Jent operated a coal mine on the Pike and Letcher county line. Jent admitted that in June of 2008 he failed to follow MSHA's approved roof control plan.

During an inspection of the mine, MSHA discovered that out of approximately 60 roof bolts, about one-third of them had turned and were not adequately torqued. According to MSHA, a fully grouted resin bolt that turns and is not properly set, cannot adequately support the mine roof.

Jent pleaded guilty in April of this year and acknowledged that there was an instalment of roof bolts for the mine that did not meet the required torque of 150 foot pounds.

Jent was indicted by a federal grand jury in January of 2010.

“Those who flout the nation's mine safety and health laws and endanger miners lives will be held accountable for their crimes,” said MSHA's Assistant Secretary of Labor Joseph Main.

Kerry B. Harvey, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky and Joseph A. Main, Assistant Secretary of Labor for MSHA jointly made the announcement today after the sentence.

The investigation preceding the indictment was conducted by the Special Investigations Unit at MSHA's District six Headquarters in Pikeville. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Davis Sledd.

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