

Commissioner Fink named to mine families council

Written by The Office of the Commissioners
Tuesday, 18 January 2011 11:29

Armstrong County Commissioner Rich Fink, a former coal miner and mine safety professional, has been appointed by Governor Ed Rendell to serve as an alternate member of the Mine Families First Response and Communications Advisory Council. Fink was sworn in by Armstrong County President Judge Kenneth Valasek.

Commissioner Rich Fink being sworn in by Judge Kenneth Valasek

“I am very grateful and consider it an honor and a privilege for my appointment to the Mine Families First Response and Communications Advisory Council,” Fink said. “I stand ready to serve when needed, I thank Governor Rendell for this appointment and the trust he bestowed upon me.”

Under the Mine Families First Program established in House Bill 483, the Department of Environmental Protection is required to establish a plan outlining steps to be taken by DEP’s Bureau of Deep Mine Safety and mine owners and operators during emergencies. The plan would include: immediate notification of miners’ family members in the event of mine emergency; transportation to the location for mine families to gather and obtain information about the mine emergency and rescue efforts; security provisions to ensure privacy of mine families at the designated locations; ensuring that mine families are briefed regularly before the news media about the progress of the emergency response; a mine families first liaison to serve as a 24 hour point of contact for mine families; coordination of nonprofit and public social service organizations that provide counseling and other social services to mine families; and notification and transportation of minor families to medical facilities when miners rescued from mines are give medical care.

Commissioner Fink has consistently been an advocate for mine safety and conditions, while also maintaining concern for the miners and their families’ needs.

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Contact: George J. Skamai

Armstrong County Commissioners' Office

For Immediate Release

724-548-3214

gjskamai@co.armstrong.pa.us