

U.S. Department of Labor Honors Peabody Energy's Farmersburg Surface Mine as Nation's Safest

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ST. LOUIS, Oct. 19 [/PRNewswire-FirstCall/](#) -- The U.S. Department of Labor has presented Peabody Energy's Farmersburg Mine with the Sentinels of Safety Award – the nation's highest safety honor. The award recognizes the safest large surface coal mine in the United States. In the past seven years, Peabody has earned Sentinels of Safety recognition in every major region where the company operates, with the Farmersburg team earning this mark of excellence twice.

The team was recognized in the large U.S. surface coal mine category for working all of 2009 – nearly 699,000 hours – without a single reportable safety incident, based on U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) criteria. This compares to the U.S. average for large surface coal mines of 1.86 incidents per 200,000 hours worked in 2009. During this period, the mine produced about 3.5 million tons of coal.

"Safety leadership on this level requires a sustained commitment to excellence and teamwork every second of every day," said Peabody Energy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Gregory H. Boyce. "We're proud of our dedicated employees for making safety a way of life. The same intense focus on training, communications and commitment that can be found throughout Peabody's global operations."

Located near Pimento, Ind., Farmersburg has operated three years – or 2 million hours – with zero incidents. The mine first earned the Sentinels of Safety Award in 2006, joining Peabody's North Antelope Rochelle Mine in Wyoming and Lee Ranch Mine in New Mexico, which were recognized in 2003 and 2005, respectively, for the nation's best safety performance. Farmersburg also has earned major honors for environmental excellence and community outreach from the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Peabody achieved the safest year in its history in 2009, marking a 21 percent improvement in its global safety rate. The company operated nine of the 20 safest surface coal mines in the nation last year.

"The exceptional teamwork and world-class practices at Farmersburg represent the type of leadership that has made 2009 the safest year in Peabody's history," said Peabody Energy Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Eric Ford. "We remain committed to replicating Farmersburg's achievement at every single operation. Through employee training, education and continuous improvement, we will work toward our ultimate goal of absolutely zero incidents of any kind."

The mine's safety achievement came during a time of transition as veteran personnel assumed positions at the nearby Bear Run Mine in Indiana and new employees joined the team. "What makes our team safe is our culture of watching out for each other," said Farmersburg Operations Manager Tom Peck. "As the workforce changed, more senior miners taught newer workers the safe ways to perform their jobs. This practice is the major reason for our success."

The company continues to earn the industry's highest recognition of safety and sustainability. Peabody's safety incidents were nearly half the industry average during the first three quarters of 2010 and the company received 15 major safety and environmental honors year to date.

The Sentinels of Safety is the oldest safety award in the mining industry. Co-sponsored by the National Mining Association and the U.S. Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration, the honor is presented to mines that achieve the lowest total reportable injury rate – which is traditionally zero in the surface mine category – and the greatest number of employee work hours each year.

Peabody Energy (NYSE: BTU) is the world's largest private-sector coal company and a global leader in clean coal solutions. With 2009 sales of 244 million tons and \$6 billion in revenues, Peabody fuels 10 percent of U.S. power and 2 percent of worldwide electricity.

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