



Commonwealth of Kentucky
Energy and Environment Cabinet

Matthew G. Bevin, Governor

Charles G. Snavely, Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mining Death in Whitley County *Green Hill Mining Inc. mine site of fatality*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 30, 2017) - A 33-year-old coal miner was killed early Thursday in a highwall accident at a Whitley County mine. Joseph W. Partin, of Williamsburg, Ky., an Auger operator/foreman with eight years of experience, suffered fatal injuries at the Green Hill Mining, Inc. GHM#51 mine in Rockholds, Ky.

Partin, who began his shift at 5 p.m. Wednesday evening, was performing maintenance work on the Auger when a section of highwall approximately 15 feet high fell, causing fatal injuries.

All mining operations were shut down Thursday after the fatality and will continue to be suspended while an investigation into the fatal accident continues. The Kentucky Department for Natural Resources, Division of Mine Safety, sent investigators to the mine early Thursday and they remain on scene.

"Last night a young Kentucky coal miner was tragically killed when a section of wall he was working next to unexpectedly collapsed," said Gov. Matt Bevin. "He is survived by his wife and two young children. Please pray for them and for our fellow Kentuckians in the Whitley County community. During times of great sorrow, communities must come together and find strength in one another. Though we are not all from Whitley County, we are part of the special community that is Kentucky. Let the family members, friends and coworkers of this young miner draw strength from our outpouring of support and love from across the Commonwealth during this trying time. United we stand, divided we fall."

The mine was last inspected on Dec.15, 2016 and a safety initiative was held at the mine on January 9, 2017. Neither visit turned up unsafe conditions.

"My deepest sympathies go out to the Partin family," Kentucky Energy and Environment Secretary Charles G. Snavely said. "We are investigating the accident and expect to learn more about how this happened and what can be done to prevent another such loss of life."

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