

INTRODUCTION

This *Proceedings* contains the presentations made during the program of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Institute on Mining Health, Safety and Research held at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia, on August 26-28, 1996.

The Twenty-Seventh Annual Institute on Mining Health, Safety and Research was the latest in a series of conferences held at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, cosponsored by the Mine Safety and Health Administration, United States Department of Labor, and the Pittsburgh Research Center, United States Department of Energy (formerly part of the Bureau of Mines, U. S. Department of the Interior).

The Institute provides an information forum for mine operators, managers, superintendents, safety directors, engineers, inspectors, researchers, teachers, state agency officials, and others with a responsible interest in the important field of mining health, safety and research.

In particular, the Institute is designed to help mine operating personnel gain a broader knowledge and understanding of the various aspects of mining health and safety, and to present them with methods of control and solutions developed through research.

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of the
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**BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA
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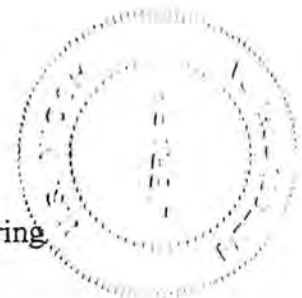
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