



# Media Advisory

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U.S. Department of Labor | Nov. 4, 2015

## **MSHA to conduct simulated mine emergency exercise at Missouri mine** *Disaster drill will highlight advances in mine rescue capabilities*

**SUGAR CREEK, Mo.** – In the event of a mine fire, explosion, roof collapse or inundation of water, expertly trained teams of men and women risk their lives to travel underground and search for missing and injured miners. Through rigorous drills and exercises, these first responders prepare themselves for a disaster they hope never occurs.

On Friday, Nov. 6, representatives of the [Mine Safety and Health Administration](#), [Central Plains Cement Company](#) and the Missouri Department of Labor’s Mine Cave Safety Program will showcase their capabilities during a joint mine [rescue](#) exercise at Eagle Materials Inc.’s underground mine in Sugar Creek, Mo.

The mine emergency response drill, or MERD, will involve nine mine rescue teams from across the Midwest using the latest underground communication and rescue technology in four simultaneous exercises:

- **Underground Communications:** Teams wearing breathing apparatuses will explore an active underground mine to search for “missing” miners and to extinguish simulated fires
- **Surface & Mine Emergency Operations:** Teams stationed at the mine emergency command center will use the latest communications technology to direct the underground teams on tasks and safety issues
- **Rescue in Smoke-Filled Environment:** Teams will travel with zero visibility (created using artificial smoke) to search for “trapped” miners and extinguish simulated fires. This is a separate exercise from the underground communications exercise
- **Injury Triage:** Teams will react to a simulated motor vehicle accident, having to rescue and administer first aid to 20 passengers on a school bus that has rolled onto its side

After brief remarks by [Joseph A. Main](#), assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health, MSHA’s chief of [Mine Emergency Operations](#) John Urosek will demonstrate the latest emergency response equipment and technology. Members of the media will then be invited to witness the four simulated scenarios.

MSHA’s new mine rescue communications system has multiple features that allow for live tracking of the movements of underground mine rescue teams on digital maps, uses cameras underground to transmit critical information to the command center, and monitors the presence and levels of various underground gases.

“Mine rescue will become safer and more efficient thanks to new technology that enables real-time communication between rescue teams underground and officials in the surface command center,” Main.

**WHO:** Mine Safety and Health Administration  
Central Plains Cement Company  
Missouri Department of Labor’s Mine Cave Safety Program

**WHAT:** Mine Emergency Response Drill

**WHERE:** Central Plains Cement Company, LLC

Sugar Creek Cement Plant  
Central Plains Cement Company  
2200 Courtney Road  
Sugar Creek, Missouri 64050

**WHEN:** Friday, Nov. 6  
10 a.m. to 12 p.m. CST

[Add this event to your Outlook calendar](#)

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