

Collapse of Kentucky plant leaves 1 worker dead, another trapped

By Leah Willingham

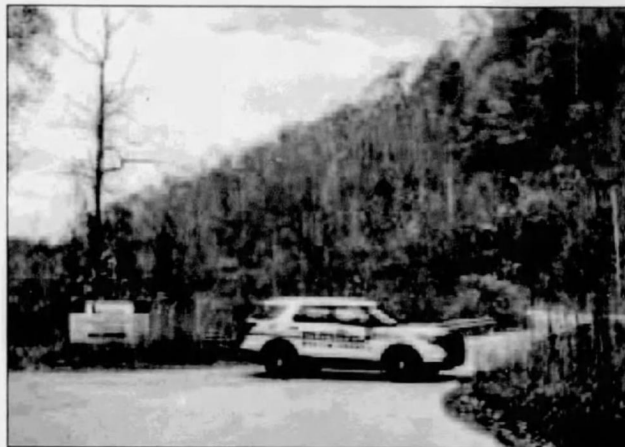
Associated Press

INEZ, Ky. — One man has died after he and a coworker were trapped beneath a collapsed 11-story building being demolished at an abandoned eastern Kentucky mine's coal preparation plant, Gov. Andy Beshear announced Wednesday.

The building at Martin Mine Prep Plant in Martin County collapsed around 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, trapping the men working there beneath multiple floors of concrete and steel. Teams were working to rescue them, Kentucky Emergency Management said in a news release on Wednesday. State emergency management officials were at the scene working with several partner agencies including urban search and rescue and technical rescue teams.

Officials didn't release details about the extent of the other man's injuries.

In a social media



Ryan C. Hermens | Lexington Herald-Leader via AP

A sheriff's vehicle blocks a road leading to the area where a rescue operation is underway for two workers trapped inside a collapsed coal preparation plant in Martin County, south of Inez, Kentucky, on Wednesday.

post Wednesday morning, Beshear said he had declared a state of emergency in the county — mobilizing state resources to help with the rescue. The governor asked for prayers for the safety of the workers and the rescue teams.

“Kentucky, keep praying — but the scene is bad,” Beshear said in a post about two hours later.

In a statement, State Sen. Phillip Wheeler, whose district includes Martin County, said he

was saddened by the news.

“This incident is a stark reminder of the inherent risks in any job and the unexpected nature of tragedy,” Wheeler said. “The General Assembly and I are closely monitoring the situation. We are prepared to assist those affected by loss or injury and their families and the local government in any way we can.”

The workers were trapped while working to demolish the building at

the abandoned mine site on Wolf Creek, Martin County Judge Executive Lon E. Lafferty said in a social media post early Wednesday.

Martin County Sheriff John Kirk told WHAS-TV that first responders made contact with one of the trapped men, but he died shortly afterward. The plant hasn't been in use for several years and the men were on the bottom floor when it collapsed, trapping them beneath tons of rubble, Kirk said.

“We never were able to locate the other (man), still haven't been able to locate (him),” Kirk said Wednesday. “We are still attempting to locate him, we are still considering this a rescue operation.”

Several rescuers were inside the rubble as part of the rescue effort, Kirk said. The rescue could take days, Kirk said.

“This is a lot of weight. A lot of large metal structures, a lot of concrete, and very confined space last. Very tight spaces,” he said.

2023 10-31 Abandoned prep plant
collapse fatal

Clipped By:
usmra_rob
Sep 19, 2024