

Electric Current Causes Explosion

A stray electrical current is believed to have caused the small powder explosion last Tuesday at the Republic Steel Corporation's Hunter mine at Whitby. Two men were injured in the blast.

Mason Fink, state mine inspector, and J. L. Petty, electrical inspector, who investigated the explosion, reported the current apparently came from a two inch pipe line which the two miners were laying in a ditch for drainway. They determined the cause of the current by using an electrical detector.

The investigators said in their report to C. M. Meadows, state mine inspector at large, the detonator which was supposed to set the charge off, was short circuited by the current.

Meadows said these stray currents were quite common in certain parts of mines. The inspector explained that these currents cause many premature explosions.

Dennis Wilson, 41, of Johnstown Road who was injured in the blast, was reported in fair condition last night at the Beckley Hospital. He underwent surgery Tuesday night in the hospital.

Another victim of the explosion, Marvin Lilly, 41, of Jonben was released from Beckley Hospital yesterday. His injuries were listed as not serious.

The Hunter mine resumed operation this year after being shut down for several years.