

June 2, 1938; Butler Slope (Anthracite), Pittston, Pa.; 10 Killed

(From Bureau of Mines report, by R. D. Currie and Norman King)

An explosion in a small, leased pillar section known as Permit No. 5208, Revised 10-23-37, killed or injured all the 16 men in the area; 8 were killed, and 2 of the 7 taken to a hospital died; 1 man was sent home with a dislocated shoulder.

On the night before a nearby pillar section started to cave, and cracks appeared on a concrete highway on the surface. The fireboss kept men out of the caving section but did not find gas. A large accumulation built up because of the caving and a door left open between 1st and 2d chambers.

At 9:20 a.m. an overcharged shot of pellet powder, fired from the powerline, ignited the gas, causing a violent local explosion that was quickly dissipated by the large area of openings in this pillar work.

The mine foreman heard the explosion and felt a wind; he took the men from the working place he was in and investigated. They came across an injured man walking out and notified the management.

Rescue crews were quickly assembled, and apparatus crews were used to recover some of the bodies.