

Coal Gas Kills Five Miners In Pennsylvania

PUNXSUTAWNEY, Pa. (AP) — Five men were asphyxiated Wednesday night in a soft coal mine near this western Pennsylvania town. Two others escaped safely.

Dr. Robert L. Shaffer, Jefferson county coroner, said the men were working in the Dora No. 2 mine of the Doverspike Brothers Coal Co. when they opened an abandoned working containing "black damp," a miner's term for air without oxygen.

Fatal Rescue Try

Shaffer said five of the crew of seven working with a continuous mining machine managed to get out but two apparently were unable to flee.

Three of the men returned to try and help their companions, and died.

Shaffer said the dead men were John Kramer, 33, and Sam Gaul, 39, both of Punxsutawney R.D. 3; Bob White, 47, of Punxsutawney R.D. 1; Hilton Neiswonger, 27, of Mayport R.D. 2; and Ronald Moore, about 25, of Dubois R.D. 1.

Need Fans

The men cut into the old working Wednesday night. Rescue operations were delayed for several hours until fans cleared the air. The bodies were recovered early today, about 14 hours after the tragedy. The men were about one mile inside the mine.

Authorities said Gaul and White were overcome inside and that Kramer, Neiswonger, and Moore went to their aid. James Ishman ran for help and Oran Anthony stayed outside the mine.

The accident happened near Dora, a small community about 15 miles west of here.