

**Men in search of
scrap metal to sell
found safe**

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MAMMOTH, W.Va. — Two men who sneaked into a closed coal mine to search for scrap metal to sell were rescued after they became lost about 3,000 feet inside the mine, authorities said.

Crews found Franklin Johnson, 44, and Glen Edelman, 45, Monday evening, a few hours after family members reported them missing. They were treated at a hospital and released.

The rescuers traced them by following the fumes from a fire the two had set after their flashlight failed as they hunkered down in the mine, authorities said. An expert said they were lucky they didn't set off an explosion or suffocate themselves.

The men, who were last seen Saturday, didn't have any food but there was water in the mine to drink, State Police Trooper 1st Class R. H. Green said.

Holly Johnson, 26, said her brother-in-law stopped by Saturday morning to borrow a flashlight and said he was going to the mine to look for scrap metal.

"We didn't think nothing of it," she said. "He's always looking for ways to get money, to pay the bills and eat."

Green said Johnson and Edelman managed to get into the mine by crawling through a hole in the ground that looked like "a groundhog hole." The rescuers had to use an excavator to enlarge the hole so they could enter the mine, he said.

The mine, which is owned by Massey Energy Inc., closed in 1993, and the entrance was barricaded to keep people out.

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