

## **17 workers rescued from New York salt mine**

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By Jason Silverstein and Meg Wagner

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Rescue crews freed 17 miners in upstate New York Thursday morning after they spent a terrifying 10 hours down in one of the world's deepest salt mines.

The first four of the Cargill Salt miners emerged to the surface in a basket around 7 a.m., police said. The rest were rescued from the salt mine over the next two hours.

Before bringing them to safety, emergency workers talked to the miners through a radio and sent blankets and heat packs down into the dark hole.

An elevator inside the Cargill Salt Mine stopped working after 11 p.m. Wednesday, leaving the team of workers stuck about 900 feet below the ground, Tompkins County Emergency Management officials told the Daily News. The mine shaft descends 2,300 feet, making it the deepest salt mine in North America.

In the end, no miners were injured, and officials said they were never in serious danger.

"This is a really proud day for a lot of us," Shawn Wilczynski of Cargill told reporters after the ordeal.

"We came to the rescue of ourselves."

The miners range in age from their 20s to 60, he said.

Lansing, a town of about 11,000 people, is 10 miles north of Ithaca.

Cargill has managed the mine since 1970, when it purchased the site's mining rights from Cayuga Rock Salt.

According to the company's website, the mine celebrated five years with no lost time accidents in March, marking one of the best records in the mining industry.

None of the miners has been identified. Representatives for Cargill could not immediately be reached for comment.