

Coal Man of the Year



Your KMI Coal Man of the Year for 2015 is Ronnie Drake. Ronnie began his coal mining career in 1974. He has worked for four coal mines during his mining career, P & M (Drake #3), P & M (Drake #4), Pleasant Hill Mine and Colonial Mine.

He left the mines in 1990 to begin working for, what was then, The Kentucky Department of Mines and Minerals. During the span of his career with the state, Ronnie worked for over six different commissioners as a mine safety analyst, mine inspector, mine inspector principal, district supervisor and mine rescue coordinator. Ronnie has dedicated long hours and energy to promote coal mine safety. He worked hard to ensure that each and every miner made it home to their family at the end of their shift. It is his work and dedication that helped to reduce the number of serious accidents and fatalities within our coal mining community. He has been a part of the investigation of 33 fatalities within our district and strongly believes that this number declined over the years due to the hard work and diligence of the inspectors and safety analysts.

After over 25 years working for the state, he earned the respect of miners throughout the nation. His outstanding achievements with mine rescue have earned him national attention. Mine rescue teams from across the nation have had the privilege of working in contests where Ronnie has not only drawn the problem but helped coordinate as well. Last year he was promoted from supervisor in the Madisonville District to the state Mine Rescue Coordinator. After a mining career spanning 41 years, Ronnie is looking forward to a much earned retirement as well as spending time with his family.

KMI thanks Ronnie for his dedication and service all these years and wish him the best of luck in retirement.