

# Wyoming Miners' Hospital Board Annual Report-2008

## General Information:

1. Edward G. Leake, Executive Director
2. Agency Contact, Edward G. Leake
3. Agency Contact phone, 1-307-382-5553
4. Agency Mailing Address, 2001 Dewar Drive  
Suite 260  
Rock Springs, WY 82901
5. Agency Web Address, <http://mhb.state.wy.us>
6. No other locations.
7. Statutory References:  
Sec.-30-6-101  
30-6-102  
30-6-103
8. The board serves Wyoming miners, active, retired or contractor.
9. Expenditures for 2008 were \$2,058,016.
10. The Board reports to the Legislature and the Governor. The board consists of the following members:  
Four (4) members of the Sweetwater County Memorial Hospital Board appointed by the county commissioners;  
Four (4) members representing miners, two (2) members from Sweetwater county and two (2) members from Campbell county, all appointed by the governor; and  
One (1) member of the Campbell County Memorial Hospital Board appointed by the county commissioners.. The board by statute must meet twice a year. This year the board met four times.

At the Fifty-Ninth Wyoming Legislative session, the 2008 Budget Session, SF 0039 was, introduced, passed and later signed into law by the Governor thus changing the make-up of the board as defined by statute in W.S. 30-6-11 (a) (i) and (ii). The total number of board members, nine, remained the same. However, three board member positions from the Sweetwater County Memorial Hospital board, appointed by the

county commissioners, were replaced by three board positions from the mining industry to be appointed by the Governor. This change went into effect July 1, 2008.

### **Quality of Life Result**

Wyoming residents have affordable and accessible health care and insurance.  
(Healthcare)

### **Contribution to Wyoming Quality of Life**

This Board has contributed to the improvement of the quality of life in Wyoming by providing health/wellness programs to the State's active, retired and contract miners. The Board's goal is to ensure that Wyoming miners are provided with health and wellness programs to improve their health from medical conditions disproportionately peculiar to the mining industry in the particular illness areas of pulmonary/respiratory, hearing loss, cardiac and musculoskeletal conditions.

### **Basic Facts**

The board has one employee, an executive director, who handles all office and program functions. The board has a biennium budget of \$5,156,580 for the 2007-2008. These funds came from the miner's hospital account within the permanent land fund and the miner's hospital income account within the permanent land income fund. The board could utilize annually up to 5% of the balance of those two accounts. The current budget is well within the limits of the available funding. This past year the board served over 5,000 miners through its various wellness programs.

The most important programs the Board offered to miners were:

*Mobile Wellness Testing*  
*Health Coaching-Rawhide Mine and Other Mines*  
*Hearing Aid Purchasing Assistance Program*  
*Miners' Medical Assistance Program*

### ***PROGRAM #1-MOBILE WELLNESS TESTING***

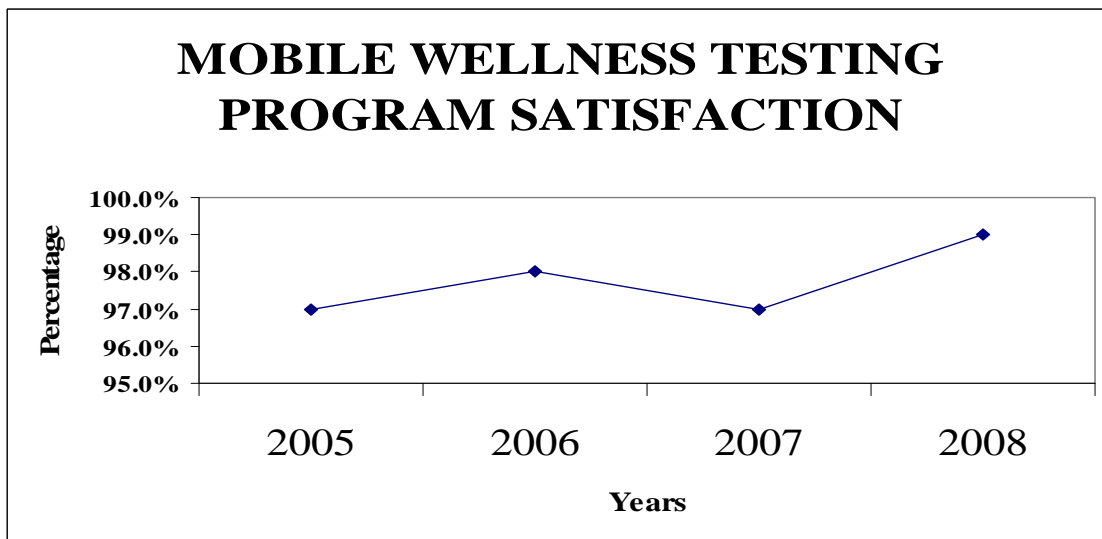
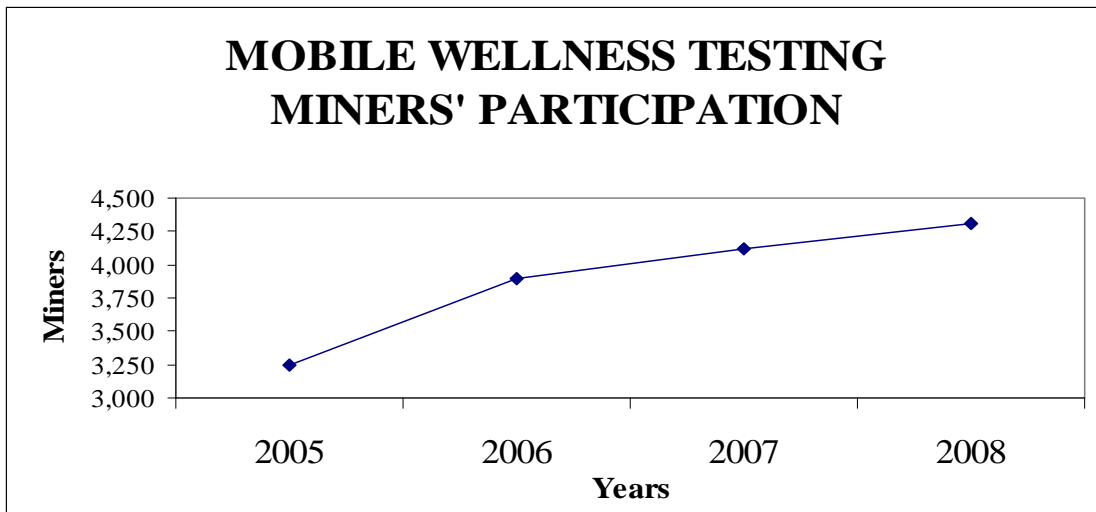
#### **Performance:**

This program provided miners with free wellness tests such as: Blood Chemistry Screen, Urinalysis, Chest X-Ray, CBC, EKG, Stationary Bike or Treadmill, Pulmonary, Hearing, Vision, Blood Pressure, Height, PSA, Weight, Body Fat and Stool Screen. These tests are administered throughout the year by mobile vans which traveled to prearranged locations throughout the state. Those locations included: Rock Springs, Gillette, Casper, Lovell, Sheridan, Douglas, Greybull, Rawlins, Kemmerer, Riverton, Wright and

Newcastle. The Board also sponsored for a second year with Campbell County Memorial Hospital and the Rawhide mine a related program which offered therapeutic follow-up and health coaching to miners who were diagnosed through the mobile wellness testing with health issues.

The number of miners tested continued to grow, but as has been seen previously, this did not always translate into improved health. Miners, who tested healthy but still had some health issues, often did not repeat the testing for some time and seldom followed up on health improvement suggestions. That is why the project with CCMH and the Rawhide mine was so important. Now in its second year, it has continued to show significant reductions in high risk health indicators.

The quality measurement used thus far has been a satisfaction percentage from the tested miners for the services received.



**Story behind the performance plotted above:**

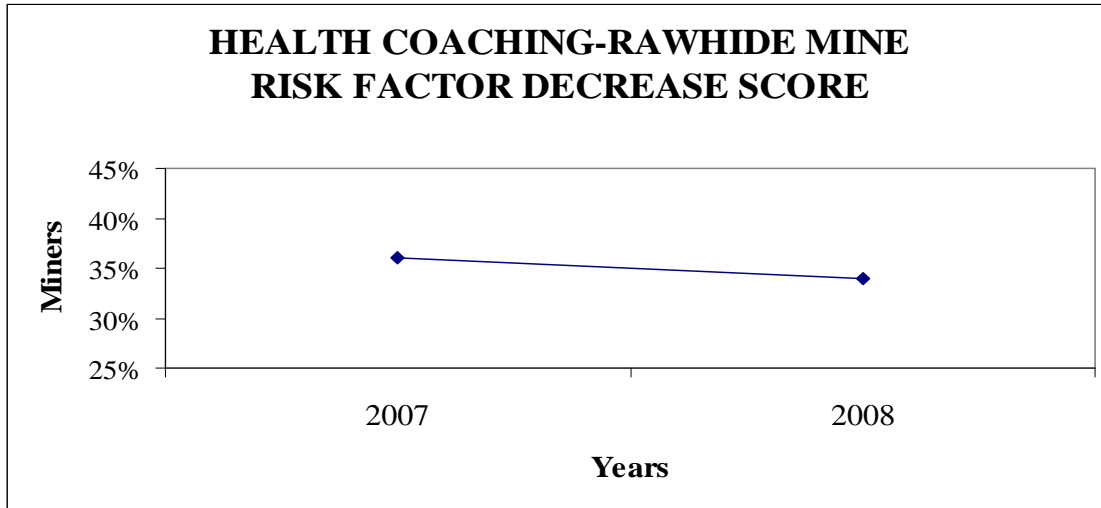
The number of miners utilizing this program continues to grow each year. The mining and contractor companies as a whole were very supportive in promoting this testing. Adding the PSA only increased the number of participating miners. The high degree of satisfaction as seen in the exit interview surveys demonstrated the success of the testing.

**What has been accomplished?**

More miners were tested and more health issues were identified. A constant of this program's performance over the years has been media promotion as to the times and places these mobile testing vehicles are setting up in the various Wyoming communities. It was a multimedia approach. The addition of the PSA to the battery of tests added to the increase of miners to the testing process. Maintaining and increasing the quality of the wellness testing to the mines and their employers was paramount. The current Health Coaching program also showed dramatically the necessity of going beyond testing into the realm of improving health.

***PROGRAM #2-HEALTH COACHING-RAWHIDE MINE*****Performance:**

All the miners who have been tested throughout the state by the Board's Mobile Wellness Testing Program these past years receive their individual tests results. Studies in other industries have shown that having these test results do not lead to improved health. So, the board entered into an agreement with Campbell County Memorial Hospital and the Rawhide mine in Gillette to offer a health coaching program to use the results and with professional help (coaching) set about bettering miners' health. This volunteer program was offered by the Rawhide Mine to its 152 miners who were eligible. 95 originally signed up. Since July 1, 2006, they have met with health coaches periodically throughout the year to develop and follow strategies to improve their health. For two years the group as a whole showed marked improvement by significant reductions in several high risk factors such as Blood Pressure, Body Weight, Cholesterol, HDL, LDL etc. The Board has extended their support of this program for a third year.



#### **Story behind the performance plotted above:**

Two years ago, the Board and Campbell County Memorial Hospital provided funding and staff to undergo follow-up coaching for miners from the Rawhide mine who participated in the mobile wellness program. The program was an obvious success, as measured by the dramatic decrease in high risk factors. Based on that, the program was extended a second year. The results through this second year (FY 2007-2008) showed that 69% of the group achieved a 34% decrease in risk factor scores. To be more particular: 24% lost 5 pounds; 29% lowered their blood pressure by 9 points and 26% lowered their cholesterol 16 points. The scores were somewhat less than the first year because some participants moved to lower risk and maintained recommended values. The board funds each miner for this coaching at \$8.00 a month for twelve months. And now the board has extended the program for this group another year.

#### **What has been accomplished?**

The board funded this program and supported the CCMH Wellness staff's coaching of these miners to maintain and improve their health. The success of the Rawhide Health Coaching program, as seen from the health indicator scores, will serve as a model for other mining companies to take on this program so that a wider range of the miners in the industry will definitely improve their health. This program can now be offered to a rapidly increasing number of miners throughout the state. However, as with the Rawhide mine, certain well-defined commitments on the part of the mining companies are necessary for participation. The mines must agree to offer some monetary incentives to their employees to take part. They must also agree to allow paid time off on the work site for the coaching sessions and to fund this coaching process on their own after three years.

In the budget for the 2009-2010 biennium funds were designated and approved to extend this program to other mines. The Caballo Coal mine in Gillette and the Black Butte Coal

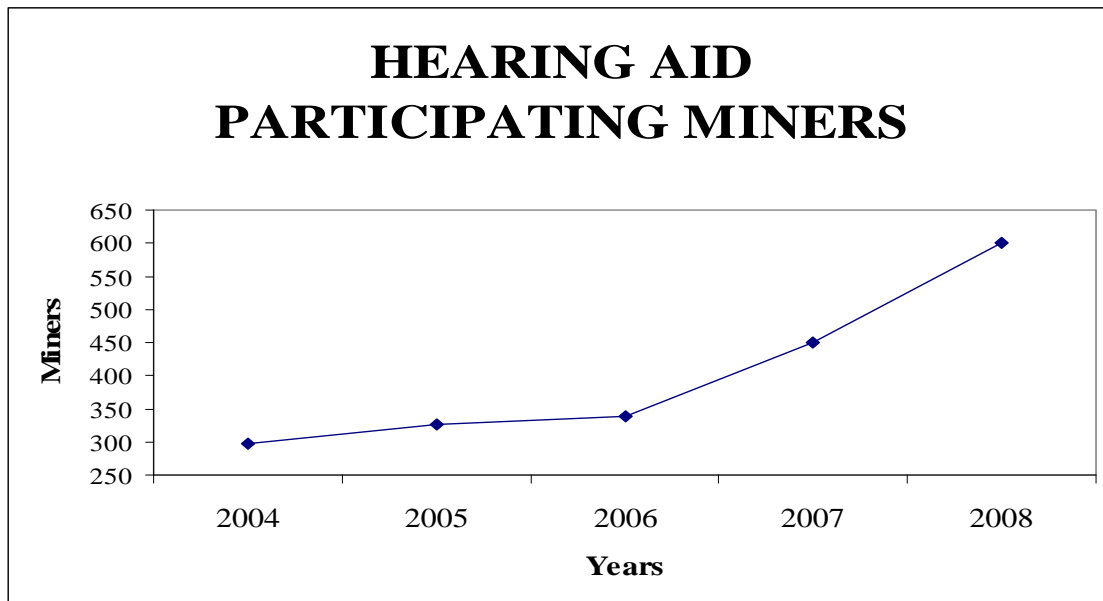
Mine in Point of Rocks have signed up for this health coaching program and will begin in late 2008. .

***PROGRAM #3-HEARING AID PURCHASING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM:***

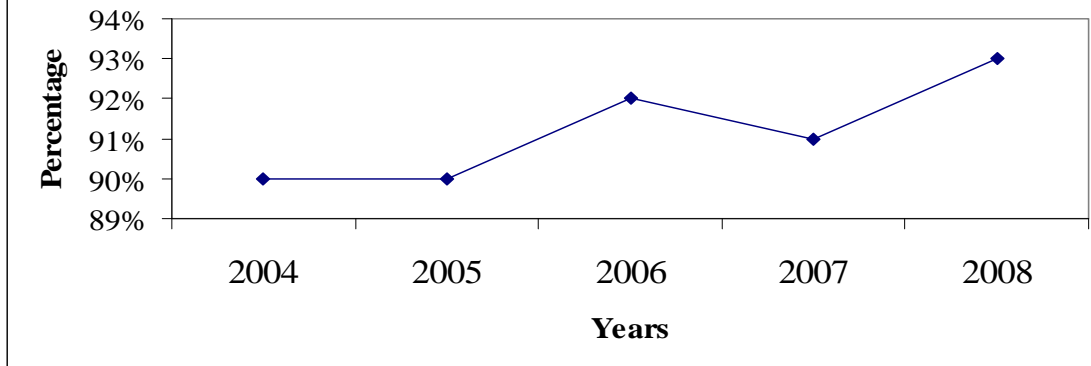
**Performance:**

In mid year of 2008 the board increased its support for miners needing hearing aids from \$750 and \$1,000 to \$1,500 and \$2,000, w the \$2,000 limit for using board PPOs. These PPO providers also offered purchase price discounts. Miners, who patronized non PPO providers, received only up to \$1,500 in subsidy. This program served 600 miners last year.

Were the miners better off? The numbers tell it all. These 600 miners from last year are now able to hear. This was no minimal achievement. The board conducted a telephone satisfaction surveys of the miners served with particular emphasis on the miner satisfaction. The survey showed an approval rating of 93%. .Further examination revealed that the only dissatisfaction was due to mechanical issues such as discomfort with the hearing aids themselves rather than service..



## HEARING AID SUBSIDY PROGRAM SATISFACTION



### Story behind the performance plotted above:

It was initially thought that there would be a large back log of miners who had hearing loss and after they were served the numbers would taper off due to the hearing conservation programs at the mines. However, the numbers of miners the board served last year showed the need is still substantial and looks to continue on as such.

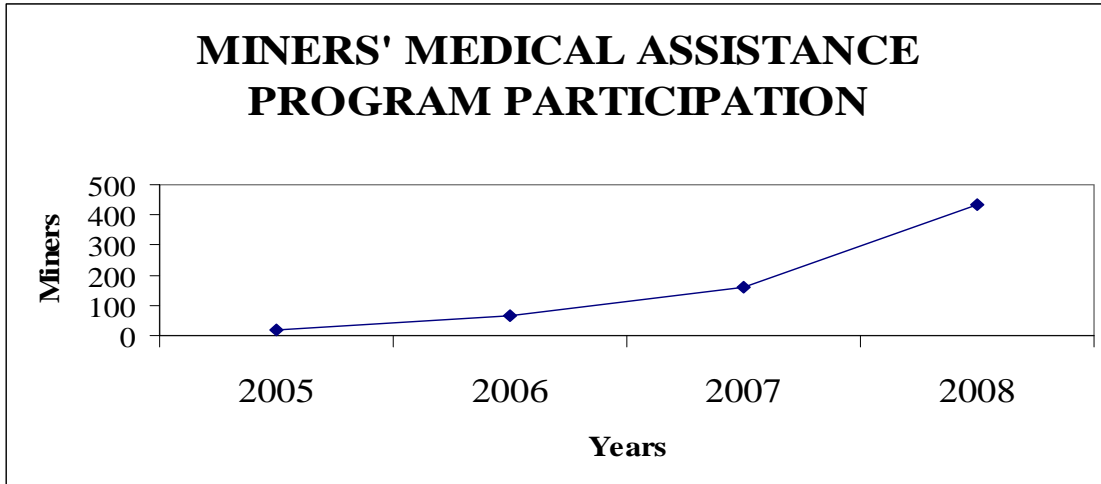
### What has been accomplished?

To paraphrase the hymn “Amazing Grace”, “I once was deaf, but now I hear”. Isn’t that enough? And over 85% of the miners served are utilizing the PPO and getting, not only the price subsidy, but also price discounts for the purchase of their hearing aids. The most recent satisfaction survey showed extremely high miner satisfaction.

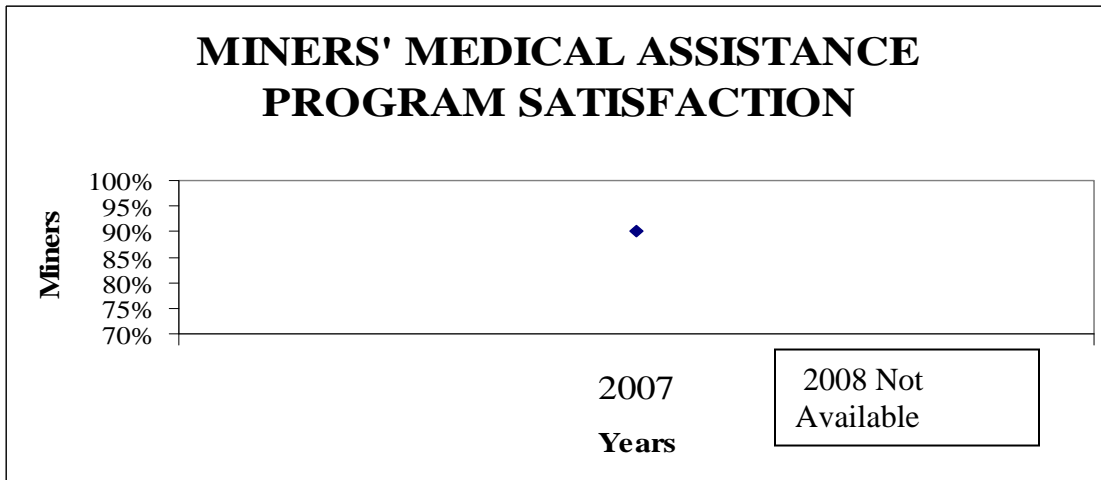
### ***PROGRAM #4-MINERS’ MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM***

#### **Performance:**

The board has increased its subsidy to miners from \$1,000 to \$5,000 in 2008 to help defray the costs of medical care and prescription drugs incurred for treatment from the four health conditions mentioned in the Statutes, namely, Cardiac, Musculoskeletal, Hearing and Pulmonary. This dollar amount was made available to eligible miners. The growth in usage over two years showed a steady, but slow, increase. Adding prescription drugs this current year to this benefit aided its growth and utilization.



(The utilization numbers until recently were too small to survey for adequate quality assessment. With the recent up swing in utilization due in part to the benefit increase a survey was planned earlier this year. However there was at that time a change over from one TPA (Third Party Administrator) Mountain States Administration from Aurora, CO. to EBMS from Billings, MT. The transition took some time for things to get back to normal. Thus the survey had to be postponed until recently and will be done this fall.



**Story behind performance plotted above:**

This program, for unpaid medical bills for the four conditions already indicated, grew at a small but steady pace. The addition of prescription drug coverage helped. But the recent change in mid year in the subsidy from \$1,000 to \$5,000 has led to dramatic increased usage. Strong efforts in getting the word of this program and eligibility out to the smaller mines, sand and gravel and the contractors have contributed to the growth.

**What has been accomplished?**

The number of miners using this program initially was somewhat less than expected. But then and as with the increased utilization now, the beneficiaries of this program are miners who needed financial assistance for medical costs for care or prescription drugs for conditions particular to the mining industry as described in the original health study that lead to the statutes and the board namely cardiac, respiratory, hearing and musculoskeletal. Right now, the usage numbers reflect somewhat the success of the program. The upcoming survey should establish that more clearly.