

<b><u>DIVISION OF MINES GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATION OF REGULATORY STANDARDS MANUAL</u></b>	
<b>COAL MINE SAFETY ACT</b>	<b>CHAPTER 14.3</b>
<b>ARTICLE 8</b>	<b>MINE OPENINGS AND ESCAPEWAYS</b>
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**Section 45.1-161.165.**

**Maintenance of Mine Openings**

**Travelways, Entries, and Openings – Safe Condition**

This section of the MSA is to be applied as requiring that all mine travelways, entries or openings be maintained in a safe condition. Openings exposed to highwalls must be protected by well constructed canopies or aprons which are designed for the height and condition of highwalls present. Benching or sloping back of highwalls may be a necessity for safe openings. Control of surface water may be necessary to maintain safe conditions at surface openings. Clearance, the safe construction and location of doors, and other structures and equipment should be considered where personnel enter and travel.

Designated escapeways for leaving the mine must be ventilated with intake air, be continuous to the surface, provided with escape facilities from slope or shaft bottoms to the surface and be the most practical direct route to the surface. To be considered in safe condition escapeways must afford adequate clearance for personnel travel and be free of excessive accumulations of water and stumbling hazards. Typically, water above the standard rubber boot would be a violation of this section, require pumping, rerouting or bridging the affected area.

Travelways in air courses which are examined weekly or more often must be maintained in safe condition for travel by examiners. Water accumulations in these areas may not be accessible for mine pumping systems. Consideration may be given to other safe accommodations to ensure the safety of examiners. This must be evaluated by the mine inspector on a case by case basis.

In considering the maintenance of mine travelways, entries, and openings in a safe condition the mine inspector must consider the mine specific condition of height of coal seam, roof conditions, extent of development, methane liberation, and ventilation effectiveness, projected mining schedule, and other mine specific factors. Further, the

purpose for which the travelway, entry or opening is used will determine what acceptable standard to apply.