

Charles E. Cook

- My name is Charles E Cook, but I go by Eddie.
- I'm the uncle of Adam Morgan, who was 21 years old when he taken from us on April 5, 1010 at Upper Big Branch.
- I have over 30 years experience in mining, 29 of which are at a union mine.
- I work at the Pinnacle mine for Cleveland Cliffs, and we try to do things the right way. Not long after the explosion, I talked to a guy at the mine I work who used to work at the Upper Big Branch mine. I told him that I heard tales of things like coal being mined with the curtains pulled down, and he confirmed that this was a regular practice in his time at the mine, and he ultimately left the mine because of certain practices. He stated that he was not even aware that the way certain things were done at UBB were unsafe or illegal until he came to the Pinnacle mine and saw how we operated and tried to comply with mining laws.
- As a union miner, I have the right to refuse to perform a job if I think it is unsafe without a fear of losing my job. I would like to see the same protections for all miners, not just union miners. There needs to be a system in place to protect whistleblowers and to ensure that these miners won't be fired a few weeks down the road for some other reason when in reality it is just retaliation for pointing out safety concerns or refusing to do unsafe jobs.
- MSHA needs to be granted more authority and power to shut down sections of a mine or the entire mine if an unsafe condition is noted which presents a serious risk to miners, instead of having to wait for several repeat occurrences of the same violation.