TABLE 1. - State mine law requirements for rock-dusting and watering - Cont'd

West Virginia:	Requires dry dust to be removed as far as practicable, and all dry, dusty sections watered or rock-dusted.
Wyoming:	All coal mines, unless consistently damp in judgment of State inspector, must sprinkle dry and dusty places twice a week. In lieu of sprinkling, mine may be rock-dusted. Rock dust is to be maintained at a minimum of 60 percent inert, with 10 percent increase with each 1 percent methane. The State inspector is required to sample and analyze dust. Barriers are permitted in trackless entries.

PROGRESS IN ROCK-DUSTING

Accurate records showing the progress of rock-dusting in American mines are not available for the years prior to 1926. Not much consideration was given to rock-dusting by coal-mine operators before 1923; however, by 1926 at least 177 mines in the United States were using rock dust, and by 1927 the number had increased markedly to 463 mines. By 1933, the number of rock-dusted mines had decreased to 382, but by 1936 it had increased again to 462. The fact that in 1936 (the last year for which statistics are available) only 462 mines reported the use of rock dust shows that the progress of rock-dusting is by no means satisfactory.

The favorable side of the record shows that the annual output of the mines using rock dust has increased from a low of 88,600,000 tons in 1932 (the lowest depression year) to 161,000,000 tons in 1936; the mines using rock dust during 1936 produced more than 37 percent of the country's bituminous coal. The fact that mines using rock dust represent but 7.5 percent of the total number of operating mines, yet produced 39.3 percent of the coal and employed 32.5 percent of the underground employees in 1936 indicates that it is chiefly the larger-capacity mines that are using rock dust.

Mines in 18 States used rock dust to some extent during 1938, but it was used most widely in Utah; about 90 percent of the State's production (including all rail-shipping mines) was from mines using rock dust. Wyoming, New Mexico, Alabama, and West Virginia rank next to Utah in this respect.

West Virginia reported 179 mines (33.4 percent) rock-dusted during 1938, compared to 89 mines rock-dusted in 1928. Although many Pennsylvania mines use rock dust, the State Compensation Rating and Inspection Bureau has given compensation credit to only 8 mines as being rock-dusted in accordance with its standards.