

The NOVA logo is displayed in a stylized, metallic blue font. It is set against a dark blue background featuring a glowing planet with a ring, similar to Saturn, and a starry space pattern.

NOVA CHRONICLES THE HUMAN DRAMA OF THE 33 TRAPPED CHILEAN MINERS AND THE SCIENCE THAT SAVED THEM

EMERGENCY MINE RESCUE

Premieres Tuesday, October 26 at 8 pm ET/PT on PBS

www.pbs.org/nova/miners



Produced for PBS
by the WGBH
Science Unit

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BOSTON, MA [FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE] – Never have so many been trapped so far down or for so long. Buried alive under nearly a half-mile of solid rock in a collapsed mine in Chile’s remote Atacama desert in early August of 2010, 33 miners fight for survival, battling 95-degree heat, near-total darkness, impending starvation, and—most dangerous of all—the risk of losing all hope of rescue. The astonishing outcome of this near-disaster is a triumph of technology and of the human spirit that has gripped the world.

Emergency Mine Rescue, a new NOVA premiering on Tuesday, October 26 at 8pm ET/PT on PBS, chronicles the prolonged ordeal faced by those 33 men, entombed in a chamber 2,300 feet belowground for 69 days, and the heroic work of a global team that struggled tirelessly around the clock in a desperate bid to bring the trapped miners safely to the surface.

“This is a truly remarkable science story as well as an incredibly compelling human drama,” said Paula S. Apsell, Senior Executive Producer of NOVA and Director of the WGBH Science Unit. “Many areas of science—from engineering and geology to biology and psychology—played a crucial role in these rescue efforts, and NOVA wanted to give viewers a more in-depth understanding of these contributions and the risks involved.”

NOVA cameras gained special access to the site of the San José mine within a few weeks after the miners were discovered alive, enabling filmmakers to capture and chronicle the unfolding events.

“This is a dramatic story that tests technology, machines, and the ingenuity of the engineers to the limit, and NOVA was there to capture these events as they unfolded and tell the story from the bottom to the top,” said Howard Swartz, Executive Producer of NOVA.

Emergency Mine Rescue reveals the stories of the three rescue teams, racing against time—and each other—to punch through dense layers of rock and reach the miners’ chamber. Using footage from below and above and animation of the underground tunnels carved out by a century of mining, *Emergency Mine Rescue* reveals the extraordinary feats of engineering that finally brought the miners to the surface, leading up to their astonishing rescue in a custom-made capsule barely 21 inches wide.

NOVA interviews several key mining experts and engineers for the film, including Laurence Golborne, the Chilean Mining Minister on site coordinating the rescue, and

more

Brandon Fisher of Center Rock, the Pennsylvania company that played a tremendous role in the rescue by providing the “Plan B” drilling equipment and solution, which ultimately worked to free the trapped men. (Fisher’s team had previous experience from its work on the 2002 Quecreek, Pennsylvania disaster.) NOVA also chronicles the many challenges, obstacles, and setbacks that must be overcome by all when trying to drill in some of the toughest desert and rock terrain on the planet.

The documentary also explores the physical and psychological impact on the miners, revealing how strong leadership, the support of family and friends, and unswerving faith in their ultimate rescue kept the men from mental collapse. The film features moving interviews with the miners’ steadfast families and footage from “Camp Hope,” the tent city where miners’ families kept vigil waiting for news of their loved ones. Viewers will also hear from medical personnel and NASA experts about how their experience with spaceflight and submarines enabled them to aid the Chilean authorities with medical advice, from the tricky issue of “re-feeding” the starving men to looking after their psychological welfare.

Emergency Mine Rescue brings viewers a gripping story of survival against the odds and faith in the face of despair, and the incredible collaboration by more than a thousand engineers, scientists and other experts to expedite the solutions that ultimately saved the lives of the 33 men.

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Now in its 37th season, NOVA is the most-watched primetime science series on American television, reaching an average of five million viewers weekly. The series remains committed to producing in-depth science programming in the form of hour-long (and occasionally longer) documentaries, from the latest breakthroughs in technology to the deepest mysteries of the natural world. NOVA airs Tuesdays at 8pm ET/PT on WGBH Boston and most PBS stations. The Director of the WGBH Science Unit and Senior Executive Producer of NOVA is Paula S. Apsell.

Funding for NOVA is provided by ExxonMobil, Pacific Life, David H. Koch, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and public television viewers.

NOVA is closed-captioned for deaf and hard-of-hearing viewers and described for people who are blind or visually impaired by the Media Access Group at WGBH. The descriptive narration is available on the SAP channel or stereo TV and VCRs. To order NOVA direct from WGBH Boston Video, visit shop.wgbh.org or call 800.949.8670.

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