



# 700K fine for accidents

*Store Norske pays huge price for injuries to two workers at Svea with 'major consequences'*

By **MARK SABBATINI**  
Editor

Store Norske has agreed to pay a 700,000 kroner fine as a result of two accidents within 11 months resulting in significant injuries to

miners at Svea, including one who had to have his arm amputated.

"Both of these accidents are very serious incidents with major consequences for those involved," said Per Andersson, the company's administrative director, in a prepared statement. "Like most accidents, they could have been avoided."

The fine, announced Friday by the Sval-

bard governor's office, was for accidents occurring in late 2011 and 2012. There have also been a number of other incidents and equipment problems that have resulted in the company temporarily halting operations for repairs and safety training.

The first incident resulting in the fine occurred Nov. 20, 2011, when an employee fell  
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## Catching a massive break



PAUL GOLDSTIEN / EXODUS TRAVELS

About two dozen visitors in zodiacs watch a massive slab of ice from Monacobreen fall into the sea July 24. The boats appear dangerously close to the glacier but Paul Goldstein, a guide during the trip, said they were about 500 meters away, which is more than the minimum safe distance. Tour boat safety has been a concern recently, with one woman killed last summer when she was hit by ice from a calving glacier and another woman killed this year when a wave capsized her boat.

# Bear of a job? Hardly

*Guard hired for 'dangerous' duty after global search says most eventful sighting was a swan*

By **MARK SABBATINI**  
Editor

So much for being the world's most dangerous summer job.

Andreas Eriksson, chosen after a much-publicized global search to protect workers from polar bears during a cultural restoration

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# Is this Norway's Yellowstone?

*Underwater volcanic range near Svalbard seen as national park and/or mining site worth billions*

By **MARK SABBATINI**  
Editor

Some are calling it Norway's equivalent of Yellowstone National Park. But good luck hiking there if you can't breath underwater.

No matter, say others, who are envisioning a newly discovered volcanic range near Svalbard as mining site potentially worth hundreds

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CHRIS WARE / UNIS

An illustration depicts the *GO Sars* passing over a newly discovered 1,500-kilometer volcanic range, named "Loki's Castle," near Svalbard.

## Who's to blame and how to express your wrath

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## Corrections policy

When we screw up you'll know about it – on the front page. One of the big complaints about newspapers is they tend to bury corrections and clarifications deep inside where few people who read the original article see them. If we need to fix something, an alert box on the front page will state what story is in error and where the full correction is printed.

## Submitting material

Letters, columns, photos and other material are welcome, but we can't offer pay for published items since nobody here is getting paid at the moment. Submissions in electronic form (text, Word documents, JPEGs, etc.) are highly preferred, although typing and/or scanning of items will be considered on a per-case basis. We reserve the right to edit submissions for length, clarity, accuracy, libel and other reasons, but we will also make every reasonable effort to contact the author about any changes prior to publication.

## Bear bullies Bergen, thousands cheer



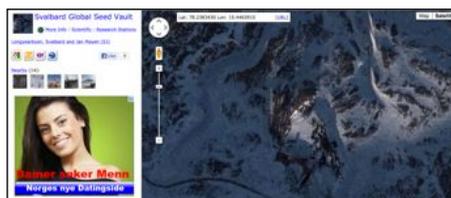
BERGEN CITY ARCHIVES

A polar bear being transported from Svalbard to a German zoo turns a stupid tourist question to reality by breaking free of its captors in Bergen's harbor and roaming the streets for a few hours on July 30, 1953. "When I lived in England and told that I came from Norway, I surprisingly was often asked if we had polar bears strolling in the streets," said Merete Baadsvik, an employee at the Bergen City Archives, who recently discovered old newspaper photos of the bear and shared them with *Bergensavisen* on the escape's 60th anniversary. The female bear, apparently trying to reach her two cubs also being transported, had "thousands of real fans," the newspaper reported.

## Icesheet

### Random bits of the week's weirdness:

Idiocy on a massive scale is necessary to be a contender for the Stupidest Article Ever About The Doomsday Vault, given the zombies and Bond-like supervillains allegedly living there. But we've got a definite finalist in **The Epoch Times' article "Six Most Secure Locations On This Planet,"** which on a per-word basis would rival Shakespeare if vacuity were a literary quality. To begin with, the other five locations are all in the United States, including Fort Knox, Area 51 and the Hollywood house of a guy named Al Corbi who sells home security systems (much as that sounds suspiciously like an advertorial, it appears the author really can't think of anything better). Setting aside that lack of global awareness, let's examine the factual claims in the entry titled "Svalbard Global Seed Vault is Actually The Fortress of Solitude" (*our comments in italics*): "One of the most remote places on Earth is the permafrost region of Norway (*which covers nearly the entire length of the country*). There, the Svalbard Global Seed Vault sits 390 feet inside a mountain on Spitsbergen. It contains the seeds for every plant discovered (*not even close*). The seed library is kept to re-grow plants if they died out due to a global disaster. There are no roads that lead to



GOOGLE MAPS

Not primarily an ad for sexy Scandinavian brides, but a journalist who claims the Doomsday Vault isn't on maps doesn't know that.



AUBREY ROBERTS / NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Hey, watch that hand: Jørn Hurum gives a dinosaur an anal probe, or so says a magazine.

this vault (*besides the one capable of handling cars, cargo trucks and the occasional tour bus*) and the location is not available on maps (if you're looking at one *of Area 51*). Also, secure? A cargo truck could probably drive through the unguarded door into the usually unoccupied vault ... We're compiling a dossier about why right wingers in the U.S. ought to love Svalbard instead of believing it's a socialist hell where impoverished slaves live in decaying shoebox apartments. Mandatory gun possession, low taxes, no welfare, no bums, great hunting and so on. Add one more to the list with the "evacuation (of) Gully, a Real-Life Loch Ness Monster," in the words of *National Geographic*, as part of Jørn Hurum's decade-long dino-dig in Svalbard. Many conservatives believe the Loch Ness monster still exists and is proof dinosaurs aren't extinct. Somehow that proves dinosaurs co-existed with humans 6,000 years ago at the Creation, rather than the hundreds of millions of years ago as junk scientists say. So Hurum's discovery proves the Flintstone Theory, even if the heretic says the fossil is actually a plesiosaur from 150 million years ago. Also, while we're on literal accuracy, someone ought to inform *National Geographic* an "evacuation" of Gully means Hurum's giving it an enema.

## A really long dig in the dirt



HANNE CHRISTIANSEN / UNIS

Bo Elberling, top right, an adjunct professor at The University Centre in Svalbard helps students collect a permafrost core in northeast Greenland as part of a long-term study seeking to improve climate models based on analyzing the release of carbon dioxide from the frozen soil. Most previous studies monitored sites for three to four months, but the long-term study lasted for a 12-year period. At right, a permafrost sample from the site reveals high ice content, which may slow CO2 release. A summary of the findings, published in the July 28 issue of *Nature Climate Change*, is at <http://tinyurl.com/obmvkq2>.



BO ELBERLING / CENPERM

## New life, riches in underwater volcanos

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of billions of kroner.

Whatever the future of the 1,500-kilometer range that's been named Lokesslottet (Loki's Castle), researchers who completed their find this summer say it makes Norway a volcanic country on par with Iceland.

"You have a meeting of 1,200-degree hot magma and ice cold water," said Rolf Birger Pedersen, a geobiology professor at The University of Bergen, in an interview with *Bergens Tidende*. "Several of the volcanoes are active and you notice it when they are started. But some have also died out and they have large accumulations of metals."

The range, extending from Jan Mayen to the Fram Strait, could potentially break the

sea's surface and form a new island chain, Pedersen said. The most recent discovery, made a few weeks ago, is of a volcano just 20 meters below the surface.

The range features "totally unique wildlife" with about 50 new species discovered so far, specimens of which could be used to develop new medications, he said. The site also has mineral fields that could be worth one million to three million kroner each, he said. The number of fields could range from a few hundred to hundreds of thousands.

Pedersen, who made his first discovery of the range in 2008, completed his survey in July with researchers aboard the *GO Sars*.

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

## HEADLINES STOLEN FROM SVALBARDPOSTEN

VERDENS NORDLIGSTE AVIS

### Two companies challenging city's high connection fees

Two companies, shocked by the city's infrastructure connection fees, are asking the Norwegian Ministry of Local Government to determine if the fees are legal. Bykaia Lagerutleie, an equipment rental company, built two warehouses at Sjøområdet in 2011, with the city then demanding 953,200 kroner for road connections. Avinor is challenging a 1.7 million kroner fee for water and wastewater connections at Svalbard Airport's new helicopter hangar. Their complaints were reviewed in December of 2011 by Norwegian Justice Minister Grete Faremo, who stated in a letter to the city, "the above fees were so high in itself, and the parameters that were assumed for calculating the fees, could indicate that these are not reflective of the city's actual costs." City Manager Lars Ole Saugnes said the fee policy was approved by the Municipal Council and relies on different parameters than mainland cities.

### Fewer rescues this summer compared to busy 2012

The Svalbard governor's office has conducted 29 rescues, all by helicopter, during the first six months of this year. That compares to 81 rescues, 50 of them by helicopter, in 2012 when an usually high 20 summer rescues at sea were necessary. There were four such rescues in 2011 and "so far there are no indications that there are many rescue operations at sea this summer," said Lt. Gov. Jon Starheimsæter. The governor's office has an 84.5 million kroner transportation budget for this year, but the cost of each rescue is difficult to quantify. Visitors and tour operators traveling to most parts of Svalbard are required to have insurance, with reimbursement last year ranging from 10,000 kroner to more than 100,000 kroner depending upon the magnitude of the rescue.

### Svalbard Turn reaches, loses, Norway Cup quarterfinals

Svalbard Turn won their first two games to reach the quarterfinals, but were defeated 3-1 by Try IL in this year's Norway Cup. The ages 15/16 boys team failed to win a game or score a goal in last year's international youth tournament.

## Weather forecast for Longyearbyen

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Rain. SE winds to 32 km/h. High 11C (8C wind chill), low 8C (7C wind chill).	Rain. Variable winds to 25 km/h. High 8C (6C wind chill), low 5C (2C wind chill).	Partly cloudy. Variable winds to 25 km/h. High 5C (2C wind chill), low 3C (-1C wind chill).	Rain/snow. W winds to 52 km/h. High 4C (-2C wind chill), low 2C (-5C wind chill).
24-hour daylight	24-hour daylight	24-hour daylight	24-hour daylight
<b>Extended forecast:</b> Sunday, p. cloudy, 2C (-3C), 0C (-4C), light 24:00h; Monday, rain/snow, 3C (-3C), 0C (-5C), light 24:00h; Tuesday, rain/snow, 3C (0C), 2C (-1C), light 24:00h; Wednesday, rain/snow, 3C (0C), 1C (-1C), light 24:00h			

Data provided by storm.no

## Getting feet off the street



MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

A couple walks on a newly paved sidewalk along Longyearbyen's main thoroughfare near the center of town Sunday. The sidewalk was part of a citywide effort to upgrade and repair streets, many of which were damaged by flooding and landslides this spring, with workers pouring 2,500 tons of asphalt during a five-day period. About three kilometers of roads were resurfaced, including two kilometers of the road to Svalbard Airport.

## Injuries costly for Store Norske

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onto a conveyor belt and was buried by coal, suffering injuries to his leg. The governor's office stated there was not an adequate risk assessment of work site and mandatory safety training was not provided.

The second accident occurred Dec. 20, 2012, when a worker tried to knock loose ice that had formed in the drum of a conveyor belt. His arm got stuck in the belt, resulting in injuries severe enough to require an amputation at the middle of the upper arm.

Among the deficiencies documented by

the governor's office for that accident was not adequately informing workers they should stop the belt when removing ice.

Andersson, in his statement, said extra emphasis is now being placed on safety.

"In the aftermath of the events we are carrying out a large prevention effort both in terms of physical changes at the facility and in the form of improved procedures and training to ensure that our employees have a safe workplace," he said.

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

## No 'bonus' for famed bear guard

### TEMP, from page 1

project at Hornsund, said the most noteworthy event during his three weeks of sitting on a hillside was seeing a swan in Svalbard for the first time.

"It's not like an extraordinary adventure," said Eriksson, a native of Sweden who moved to Longyearbyen in 2006, after returning from the job in late July. "It's nothing special. Those guys who go out and see bears every day in east Svalbard, that's another thing."

Thrill seekers worldwide had different expectations, with about 300 people applying for the temp job advertised by the Svalbard governor's office. While frequently-needed polar bear guards are usually recruited locally by the governor and other entities, the decision to expand the search resulted in an explosion of media coverage often describing the job as perfect for someone with a death wish.

Ultimately, the governor's office continued to hire local by selecting Eriksson, who spotted several bears while working as a guard in northern Spitsbergen in 2009. In his application, he stated he was content to be outdoors

focusing on the job, rather than hoping to see bears.

"If you get to see a bear that's a bonus," he said. "People can live here for 10 years and never see a bear."

Workers at the site were documenting the condition of hunting cabins that may be restored at the site, which was a whaling and sealing outpost beginning in the early 17th century. Eriksson said he usually woke up at about 7 a.m., worked until about 5 p.m., and went hiking or did other activities with the workers during the evening.

There was no need for a night guard, as they slept in one of the governor's cabins with a tripwire around the perimeter.

Standing guard meant Eriksson couldn't let his attention wander during the long shifts on a hillside above the workers. But there were ways of fighting off boredom.

"If you sit long enough you just get up and go down to talk to the guys and have some coffee," he said.

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

## What's up

### Aug. 6

7 p.m.: Evening Mass and social gathering. Svalbard Church.

### Aug. 11

11 a.m.: Mass, with return of regular Priest Leif Magne Helgesen. Svalbard Church.

8 p.m.: Movie: "R.I.P.D.," U.S. action/comedy, no age limit specified. Kulturhuset.

### Aug. 13

7 p.m.: Evening Mass and social gathering. Svalbard Church.

### Aug. 18

6 p.m.: Movie: "Ernest and Celestine," French animated film dubbed in Norwegian, all ages. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "Percey Jackson: Sea of Monsters" (3D), U.S. action/adventure, no age limit specified. Kulturhuset.

### Aug. 19

2 p.m.: Environmental and Industrial Committee meeting. Næringsbygget 3, Newtontoppen room.

### Aug. 20

1 p.m.: Administration Committee meeting. Næringsbygget 3, Newtontoppen room.

### Aug. 21

6 p.m.: Movie: "Despicable Me 2," U.S. animated/comedy dubbed in Norwegian, no age limit specified. Kulturhuset.

### Aug. 25

11 a.m.: Mass. Svalbard Church.

6 p.m.: Movie: "Despicable Me 2," U.S. animated/comedy dubbed in Norwegian, no age limit specified. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones," German/U.S. action/adventure, no age limit specified. Kulturhuset.

### Aug. 28

6 p.m.: Movie: "Monsters University" (3D), U.S. animated dubbed in Norwegian, ages 7 and up. Kulturhuset.

## What's online

**Icepeople.net** provides daily updates of news about Svalbard and the world's polar regions, plus extras for articles from the print edition. Among the latest news:

- *Sea-level rise threatens 1,400 cities*
- *Rise in violence linked to climate change*
- *Explorer: Put dogsled racing in Olympics*
- *Rapping to preserve rare Arctic language*