



## MSHA's Accident Prevention Program Safety Idea

Safety and  
Health are  
Values!

### Shrapnel From Miners' Bits

Mine Type: **All Underground**  
Category: **Longwalls and Section Face Equipment**



A continuous mining machine operator was fatally injured when a piece of shrapnel from a miner bit flew back from the face. A sharp, lethal piece of steel, traveling at a high speed struck him in the neck.

Hard carbonate nodules had been encountered in the cut resulting in a large amount of sparking at the face. The accident investigation revealed the shrapnel came from a miner bit which had lost its tungsten carbide cutting tip.

From September 2000 through July 2003 there have been seven reportable accidents and one fatal accident involving shrapnel from an operating continuous mining machine's cutter head. MSHA strongly recommends miners:

- Replace dull, cracked or burred miner bits every cut and more often when hard cutting conditions are encountered. When in doubt follow the bit manufacturers' replacement recommendations. Once the tip is lost the bit body becomes a blunt pick pounding on the face.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment such as ANSI Z87.1 eye and face protection when near the active mining face.
- Read, know and follow manufacturers' recommendations and company safety policy.

**Remember "SAFETY IS A VALUE" you can live with.**

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