



Fatality #6 - February 26, 2003
Slip/Fall of Person - Surface – Wyoming
Thunder Basin Coal Company, LLC - Black Thunder Mine

COAL MINE FATALITY - On Thursday, February 20, 2003, a 44-year old preparation plant operator with 25 years of total experience fell approximately 19 feet through a four-foot square opening in the upper level flooring at a conveyor drive station onto a conveyor tail pulley at a lower level of a surface facility. The flooring had been removed to allow materials to be lowered for construction work. The opening had been protected with nylon rope and flagging. The victim, a plant foreman, was aware of the work being performed. He was taken to the hospital for emergency medical treatment and died of his injuries on Tuesday, February 25, 2003.



Best Practices

- Protect accessible floor openings with substantial railings or barriers to prevent falls of persons.
- Cover openings in floors with substantial material when the opening is not in use.
- Always use fall protection equipment, safety belts and lines, when working near openings where there is a danger of falling.
- Establish procedures and train personnel in procedures for removing, protecting, and replacing flooring during construction or maintenance.

This is the 6th fatality reported in calendar year 2003 in the coal mining industry. As of the accident date in 2002, there were six fatalities reported in the coal mining industry. This is the first fatality classified as Slip or Fall of Person in 2003. At this time in 2002, there were no fatal accidents classified as Slip or Fall of Person.