

Respirable Dust Control for Miners and Mine Operators



U.S. Department of Labor

Mine Safety and Health Administration Health Hazard Information Card HH-41

This card provides critical information about miners' rights to a healthful workplace and the responsibilities of mine operators to provide a dust-free workplace to prevent black lung in miners.

Miners Have The Right To:

- Air free of harmful levels of respirable coal mine dust.
- Training on:
 - *dust controls in the mine's approved ventilation plan*
 - *the sampling procedures required to accurately monitor dust levels.*
- Dust controls in the mine's ventilation plan operating as specified.
- See the operator's dust sampling results (posted on mine bulletin board).
- NIOSH-approved respirators when working in excessive dust.
- Request an MSHA inspection when:
 - *excessive dust levels are suspected*
 - *required dust controls are not used or maintained*
 - *the operator's dust sampling is not done properly.*

Mine Operator's Responsibilities

- Keep dust levels below standard on each shift, using environmental controls.
- Use and maintain all dust controls in the ventilation plan on every production shift.

- Perform on-shift examinations to assure all required controls are in use and working properly.
- Conduct dust sampling under typical operating conditions by:
 - *properly maintaining sampling equipment including cleaning and inspecting sampling head assemblies*
 - *following the regulatory requirements for proper collection of dust samples*
 - *taking dust samples bi-monthly and submitting the required number of samples for testing*
 - *submitting samples that reflect dust conditions under normal work activities*
 - *not altering, opening, or tampering with dust samples*
 - *posting sample results on the mine bulletin board for 31 days.*
- Make NIOSH-approved respirators available when excessive dust levels are present.
- Report to MSHA any status changes that affect dust sampling within 3 days.
- Train miners, at least annually, on:
 - *the health hazards of breathing respirable coal mine dust*
 - *the purpose of effective dust sampling and dust controls*
 - *the mandatory health standards that apply to their mine*
 - *the health provisions of the Mine Safety and Health Act*
 - *the dust control portion of the approved ventilation plan*
- Emphasize the importance of participating in the NIOSH X-ray program.

--REMEMBER--

Black lung is NOT curable, but it is preventable!

If you have questions about coal mine health matters, please contact your local MSHA office or see the MSHA website at www.msha.gov.