Continuous Miner/Loading Machine Operators and Helpers

Best Practice Series
BP-47

Protection for Production

Most coal mined today continues to be produced by continuous miners and loading machines, and the miners who operate them.

Causes of accidents to these occupations include:

- Not properly using and maintaining personal protective equipment.
- Failure to adequately examine work areas and equipment.
- Not ensuring that all ventilation controls are in place and being maintained.
- Methane monitors not properly operating or calibrated.
- Equipment not maintained or properly operating.
- Lack of knowledge and failure to follow approved ventilation/roof control plan requirements.
- Lack of knowledge and failure to follow approved emergency firefighting and evacuation plans.
- Failure to adequately communicate with other miners.
- Insufficient cleanup and rock dusting.
- Unsafe body/hand positioning.
- Traveling under unsupported roof.

U.S. Department of Labor
Mine Safety and Health Administration

To prevent these types of accidents, miners should:

- ✔ Use and know how to use all personal protective devices, including SCSRs, safety glasses, and hearing and respiratory protective devices.
- ✔ Make sure their work area and equipment have been adequately examined, not only by themselves, but by certified persons.
- ✔ Install, repair, or replace ventilation controls, particularly check curtains and line brattice, as needed or required.
- ✔ Regularly calibrate and check methane monitors to ensure proper function.
- ✔ Know and follow all ventilation/roof control plan requirements. Make sure air current volume and velocity are complied with.
- ✔ Keep equipment well-maintained, free of combustible materials, and working properly, including water sprays, bits, and scrubbers (if installed).
- ✔ Know the mine's firefighting and evacuation plans and be familiar with the mine's escapeways.
- ✔ Communicate with other workers on the section. Use warning devices on equipment and use reflective materials. Report any unusual or hazardous conditions to mine management.
- ✔ Follow the mine's clean-up program. Thoroughly rock dust the mine floor, roof, and ribs.
- ✔ Stay clear of loading boom and cuttinghead. Miners should keep their body and hands inside the operations compartment, if provided. When tramming, avoid pinch points.
- ✔ Never travel inby or under unsupported roof, except to install additional support.

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