



Gravity Continues to Pose Threat to Miners

**In this
 Metal and
 Nonmetal
 Quarterly**

Article: Page:

Gravity Continues to Pose Threat to Miners 1

Seasonal Affective Disorder Strikes Americans 2

August Sweep 2004 Successful 3

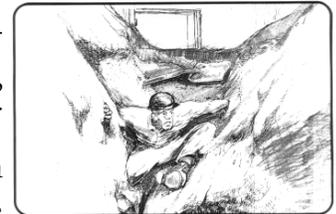
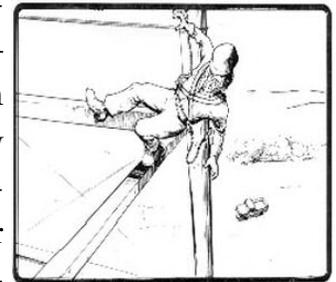
2003 Sentinels of Safety Winners Announced 4

USA, EARTH- Despite the urging of Bob Friend in this year's Winter Metal and Nonmetal Quarterly, miners continue to ignore dangers related to falls and falling material. So far in 2004, eleven metal and non-metal fatalities have occurred involving people falling or material falling on people. This makes gravity responsible for more than half of all chargeable fatalities occurring in 2004.

"Falls and falling material are among the most common kinds of fatalities in mining these days," said John Radomsky, Accident Investigator Program Manager, "and are also among the most preventable."

The continued existence of gravity surprises few in the scientific community, who have been studying its effects since early times. Gravity has been found to be a mutually attractive force that causes unsecured objects to fall and strike the Earth, often with great force.

So what can be done? It is believed that six of the eleven fall and falling material fatalities in 2004 could have been easily prevented by the use of fall protection. Whenever work is being performed at height, a secured safety harness and lanyard should be used. Working at height includes even relatively small heights, such as the tops of trucks, from which two truck drivers have fallen to their deaths this year.



Representation of past fall and falling material accidents from fatalgrams

MSHA urges all miners, mine operators, and contractors to remember the hazards posed by gravity and the procedures that can mitigate them.



Safety in action: fall protection in use

Seasonal Affective Disorder Strikes Americans

STEYNING, ENGLAND— Seasonal Affective Disorder, SAD, is a seriously disabling illness, according to England's SAD Association. As the hours of daylight grow shorter, people around the world react in different ways. For those suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD, one reaction can be mild to severe depression. "For many people SAD is a seriously disabling illness, preventing them from functioning normally without continuous medical treatment" says England's SAD Association, a non-profit organization whose mission is to educate the public about SAD and what can be done to address the illness.

SAD can be identified by symptoms of depression, such as excessive eating,



Shortened daylight hours during winter are thought to increase sufferers' levels of melatonin

sleeping, or weight gain, occurring regularly during the winter but not in the summer. This depression is thought to

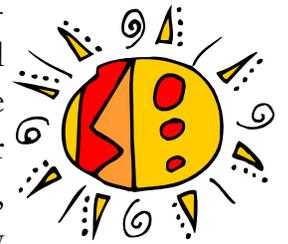
be caused by an imbalance of melatonin, a hormone related to sleep whose production is increased at night.

MSHA has long noted a trend of increasing serious injuries and fatalities during September, October and November. Could this be a result of the lethargy and inattentiveness brought on by SAD depression? "We really can't say for sure that this is the cause, but it certainly warrants consideration. Mine operators and miners should be aware that SAD could pose additional hazards during the coming months.," says Thomas Loyd, Chief of M/NM Safety Division.

Light therapy has been found to be an effective treatment, simulating daylight with lights at least five times as bright as ordinary household lights. Antidepressant drugs can be effective, but often have unwanted side effects, such as sleepiness and lethargy, which exacerbate the pre-existing symptoms of SAD. Neither of these is particularly useful in the mining

environment. So what can be done?

Making an effort to get more sunlight can be very effective. Many sufferers rearrange their home or office to let in more light. Others spend additional time in the winter sunlight, especially



at midday. One study found that an hour of walking outside was as effective as two and a half hours of bright lights indoors.

SAD is a particular threat to those who work in dark conditions, such as underground miners. Night workers who sleep during the day are also at risk, since they tend to sleep through many of the few daylight hours of winter days. All this makes SAD a serious concern for miners.

Vigilance and awareness remain the best prevention measures. Pay close attention to miners that seem to have a low energy level or show lessened interest in their surroundings.

August Sweep 2004 Successful

DENVER, CO— Rocky Mountain District Manager Tommy Hooker congratulated field office supervisors in his district on a job well done in educating mine supervisors during this year's August Sweep. His district is not alone. All of metal and non-metal's field office supervisors went to dozens of mines during most of the month of August to discuss safety techniques for mine supervisors.

"August Sweeps are a great opportunity for MSHA personnel to interact with members of industry in a positive, cooperative way."

-Tommy Hooker, District Manager, Rocky Mountain District

"The August Sweeps are a great opportunity for MSHA personnel to interact directly with members of industry in a positive, cooperative way," said Hooker. "I was especially excited this year about having my supervisors talk to industry's supervisors."

The presentations discussed the important role of mine supervisors in the safety of miners, which includes taking responsibility for on-site training of inexperienced miners. A distinction was made between the



different types of experience:

- Total experience- the total time a miner has been working in the industry
- Job experience- the time a miner has been performing a given task
- Mine experience- the time a miner has been working at that site.

Miners that have a lot of total and job experience but little mine experience were singled out as important targets for on-site training by MSHA supervisors.

Another area of focus for mine supervisors role in miner safety was accident prevention by conducting pre-work inspections. MSHA inspectors commonly cite mine operators for failing to adhere to 30 CFR §56/57.14100,

which mandates inspections for equipment and §56/57.18002, which mandates inspections for workplaces.

The presentations pointed out that compliance with these standards could dramatically reduce the total number of citations and the costs of penalties. Besides that, countless accidents could be prevented, saving time, money, and lives.

Last year's August Sweep focused on a number of topics, including the role of mining executives and teamwork between mining personnel.

The August Sweep is part of MSHA's effort to reach out to all parts of the mining industry to work together towards the common goal of zero accidents.

2003 Sentinels of Safety Winners Announced



ARLINGTON, VA- The results are in for the 2003 Sentinels of Safety Awards, which recognize remarkable injury free records and strong commitment to a safe and healthy workplace. From a field of more than fifty eligible candidates in Metal and Nonmetal, only six mining operations could receive this year's trophy for their category. "We're especially proud this year, not only of the winners, but also of the total number of eligible operations", said Metal and Nonmetal Administrator Bob Friend, "which shows a widespread commitment to safety across the industry."

Sentinels of Safety trophies have been awarded to mining operations since 1990, when MSHA and the National Mining Association

(NMA) partnered to recognize those with excellent safety records and to encourage others to further their commitment to safety. Each year since, a trophy has been given to a winner in each of eight categories: underground coal mines, surface coal mines, underground metal mines, underground nonmetal mines, open pit stone quarries, sand and gravel bank or pit operations, metal and nonmetal (not stone or sand and gravel) open pit mines, and sand and gravel dredge operations.

To be eligible, a mining operation must have reported their employment data to

MSHA for each quarter of that year, have at least 30,000 employee hours in the relevant subunit, and have had no injuries resulting in days of restricted work, days lost, permanent disability, or a fatality. The mining operation in each category that meets these criteria with the highest number of employee hours in the relevant subunit wins the trophy.

In addition, Certificates of Accomplishment are given to each employee at the winning operations and Certificates of Achievement in Safety are given to each operation that qualified but didn't win.

The 2003 Metal and Nonmetal Sentinels of Safety winners are:

Type of Operation	Metal Underground	Nonmetal Underground	Stone Open Pit	Sand and Gravel Bank or Pit	Metal and Nonmetal Open Pit	Sand and Gravel Dredge
Name of Operation	Kennecott Greens Creek Mine	Morton Salt Fairport Mine	5 R Constructors LLC	School House Mine Operation	Swift Creek Mine	Davenport Sand Mine

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