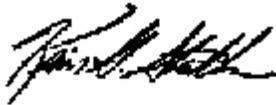
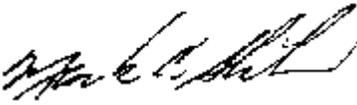


ISSUE DATE: 07/31/07

PROGRAM INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. P07-20

FROM: KEVIN G. STRICKLIN 
Administrator for
Coal Mine Safety and Health

MARK E. SKILES 
Director of Technical Support

SUBJECT: Change to Respirable Dust Data Card - Addition of Pre-weight Date

Who needs this information?

Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) personnel, coal mine operators, miners' representatives, and coal contractors.

Why is MSHA issuing this Program Information Bulletin (PIB)?

This PIB is to inform the industry of a change in the respirable dust data card to allow MSHA to analyze mine operator low weight gain optional quartz samples. The date the filter was pre-weighed has been added to the line where the initial weight is recorded.

What is the background for this change?

Mine operators have requested that MSHA analyze the optional respirable dust samples they collect for determining the percent quartz in respirable coal mine dust according to the same weight gain criteria used for samples collected by MSHA personnel. Mine operator samples currently analyzed for quartz by MSHA must have a minimum weight gain of 0.450 milligram (mg). The criteria to analyze MSHA-collected samples with as little as 0.100 mg of dust on surface samples and 0.200 mg of dust on underground samples, requires the use of filters pre-weighed to the thousandths (0.001) of a milligram and submittal of a blank filter that was pre-weighed on the same date as the filter used for sampling.

What is the effect of this change to the dust data card?

Mine operators will be able to submit a blank filter pre-weighed on the same date as the filter used to collect the optional quartz samples. Mine operators are not required to submit this blank filter in order to have MSHA analyze optional quartz samples. If a mine operator submits optional quartz samples without the appropriate blank filter, MSHA will analyze the sample according to existing procedures.

If the operator opts to submit a blank filter with any optional quartz sample, the following procedures will apply: 1) The blank filter must be carried in the same area where the optional sample is collected and it must remain capped during the entire sampling shift. 2) At the end of the sampling shift, the operator must prepare the optional quartz sample in the manner currently required. 3) The operator will then complete items 2, 4, 5, 6, 10 and 13, record a "9" in item 9 and mark a large capital "C" in the middle of the blank filter dust data card. 4) The blank filter/cassette must be attached to the optional sample filter/cassette and transmitted to MSHA in the same mailing box. MSHA will apply the same processing criteria used to analyze MSHA-collected samples to these optional samples. Operator optional quartz samples that contain at least 0.100 mg (surface) or 0.200 mg (underground) weight gain and are accompanied by an appropriate blank filter, will be analyzed for quartz. MSHA will use valid samples with at least 25 micrograms of quartz to establish the average quartz level for determining the applicable respirable dust standard.

Who are the MSHA contact persons?

Coal Mine Safety and Health, Health Division
Robert A. Thaxton, (202) 693-9515
E-mail: Thaxton.Robert@dol.gov

Technical Support, Pittsburgh Safety and Health Technology Center
Matt Fenlock, (412) 386-6499
E-mail: Fenlock.Matthew@dol.gov

Is this PIB on the Internet?

This PIB may be viewed on the World Wide Web by accessing the MSHA home page (<http://www.msha.gov>) and then choosing "Compliance Info" and "Program Information Bulletins."

What is the authority for this PIB?

30 C.F.R. Parts 70, 71 and 90

Who will receive this PIB?

Program Policy Manual Holders

Miners' Representatives

Coal Mine Operators

Coal Mine Contractors

Special Interest Groups