

ISSUE DATE: 07/31/09

PROGRAM INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. P09-23

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

SUBJECT: Re-Issue P05-13 - Underground Scoop Accidents

Scope

Coal mine operators, miners and miners' representatives, and Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) enforcement personnel should have this information.

Purpose

The purpose of this bulletin is to inform the mining community of best practices for reducing accidents related to the use of scoops and mobile equipment, where the equipment operators were struck by extraneous materials during operation.

Information

Examiners and mobile equipment operators should be alert to hazardous roadway conditions. Mine safety management systems and procedures should include methods for preventing, detecting, reporting, and correcting conditions or practices that expose scoop and other mobile equipment operators to these conditions. Examples of such hazardous roadway conditions include extraneous materials in the roadway such as belt structure parts, steel rails, loose roof bolts or partial bundles of roof bolts, steel pipe, and timbers. These conditions can be detected during applicable preshift, supplemental, or on-shift examinations of roadways, travelways, and track haulageways (refer to Sections 30 CFR §§ 75.360, 75.361 and § 75.362). Hazardous conditions found during such examinations must be corrected immediately or remain posted until corrected, pursuant to 30 CFR § 75.363. Following fatal accidents, MSHA has issued Notice to Provide Safeguard(s) pursuant to § 75.1403, requiring the operators at these mines to ensure that hazardous or extraneous materials are removed from travelways and haulageways where such equipment is to be operated.

The following best practices have been identified as having the potential to prevent accidents, injuries and fatalities to scoop operators:

- Examine active roadways as often as necessary to ensure safety, particularly when hauling loose materials.
- Maintain all roadways free of materials that may pose a hazard to equipment operators, passengers or other miners.
- Emphasize safe operating procedures for equipment and maintenance of roadways in all training programs.
- Ensure that suitable eye protection is worn whenever riding on or operating mobile equipment.
- Ensure that adequate roadway clearance is available for mobile equipment, particularly with respect to vertical clearance from low overhead objects such as roof support or ventilation materials.
- Keep loads contained within the confines of the scoop bucket.
- Use only tested and approved mechanisms for pulling or towing.

Background

Fatal coal mine accidents have occurred when operators of scoops or similar mobile equipment were struck and injured by extraneous material. Several fatalities and non fatal accidents were caused by loose debris thrown from the roadway by the scoop wheels or bucket. A significant percentage of the nonfatal accidents were eye injuries. Lack of clearance for the scoop car in the roadway and inadequate pulling or towing devices have been identified as contributing factors.

Authority

The Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977, Section 103(a).

Internet Availability

This information bulletin may be viewed on the Internet by accessing MSHA's home page at www.msha.gov and then choosing "Compliance Info" and "Program Information Bulletins."

Issuing Office and Contact Person

Coal Mine Safety and Health
Terry Bentley, (202) 693-9521
E-mail: bentley.terry@dol.gov

Coal Mine Safety and Health
Marcus Smith, (202) 693-9547
E-mail: smith.marcus@dol.gov

Distribution

MSHA Program Policy Manual Holders

Miners' Representatives

All Mine Operators

Special Interest Groups