

Examination of Respirable Dust Controls at Underground Coal Mines



Health Hazard Information Card HH-1

The Secretary of Labor's Advisory Committee on the Elimination of Pneumoconiosis Among Coal Mine Workers endorsed the new MSHA rule in 30 CFR Section 75.362(a)(2). That rule requires mine operators to conduct an on-shift examination of respirable dust control measures stated in the ventilation plan. Such controls are primarily engineering controls but may also include work practices. Maintaining these controls protects miners against excessive concentrations of respirable dust that can cause serious and sometimes fatal lung diseases, such as "Black Lung" and silicosis.

What controls must be checked?

Mine operators are required to check the 1) water pressure and water flow to dust suppression sprays on the continuous miner, cutting machine, and longwall unit; 2) air quantity and air velocity at locations where machinery is operating; 3) dust collectors on drills, miners, and other equipment and; 4) other controls as stated in the approved ventilation plan.

Who conducts the examination?

The mine operator may designate a person or persons who are familiar with all of the dust controls specified in the mine ventilation plan. This may include a miner operating specific mining equipment such as the continuous miner or the roof bolter.

When is the examination required to be conducted?

It must be conducted on each coal producing section prior to coal production or within 1 hour of the change of shift if "hot seating."

What if controls are found not working properly?

The mine operator is required to stop production until the dust controls are returned to their proper operation.

How are the examinations recorded?

The certified person who directs the on-shift examination must certify by initials, date, and time that it was conducted.

What examination findings must be recorded?

Only results that constitute a hazard to miners need to be recorded pursuant to 30 CFR Section 75.363.

If you have questions about any occupational health matter, please contact your local MSHA office or MSHA's national office at (202) 693-9414.

Our job is to protect your health

*U.S. Department of Labor
Mine Safety and Health Administration
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January 2006