

# On-Shift Examination of Respirable Dust Controls at Underground Coal Mines



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

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## Health Hazard Information Card HH-40

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Preventing black lung requires a work environment free of excessive dust. The dust control portion of the mine's approved ventilation plan specifies what dust control measures must be used whenever mining activity is occurring.

Ventilation plans specify environmental or engineering controls that either reduce dust generation or dilute, suppress, or capture dust released into mine air.

MSHA regulations require mine operators to conduct **on-shift examinations** to make sure these controls are being properly used and maintained on each production shift.

### *Who Conducts the Examination?*

- Person(s) designated by the operator who must:
  - be familiar with the dust controls in the mine's ventilation plan.
  - have the appropriate tools (pressure gauge, anemometer, etc.) available and understand their proper use.

### *Where and When Must the Examination Be Conducted?*

- On each section, following a shift change that interrupts production.
- On each section, within one hour of a shift change ("hot seating").

(over)

# BLACK LUNG KILLS!

## *What Controls Must Be Examined?*

- Air quantities and velocities.
- Water pressures and flow rates.
- The water delivery system—check for leaks.
- Water sprays—check number, location and condition.
- Section ventilation setup and control device placement.
- Other control measures specified in the ventilation plan, including:
  - cleaning of machine-mounted dust scrubbers.
  - checking scrubber air inlets and discharges for plugging.
  - measurement of scrubber air quantity.

## *What If Deficiencies in Controls Are Found?*

- Must be corrected before production begins.
- Must be corrected before production continues when “hot seating.”

## *Who Certifies That the Examination Was Made?*

The certified person who either conducted or directed the examination.

—REMEMBER—  
**Black lung is NOT curable,  
but it is preventable!**

If you have questions about coal mine health matters, please contact your local MSHA office or see the MSHA website at [www.msha.gov](http://www.msha.gov).

