

Respirable Dust Control for Miners and Mine Operators



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

Health Hazard Information Card HH-41

This card provides critical information about miners' rights to a healthful workplace and the responsibilities of mine operators to provide a dust-free workplace to prevent black lung in miners.

Miners Have the Right to:

- Air free of harmful levels of respirable coal mine dust.
- Training on:
 - *dust controls in the mine's approved ventilation plan.*
 - *the sampling procedures required to accurately monitor dust levels.*
- Dust controls in the mine's ventilation plan operating as specified.
- See the operator's dust sampling results (posted on mine bulletin board).
- NIOSH-approved respirators when working in excessive dust.
- Request an MSHA inspection when:
 - *excessive dust levels are suspected.*
 - *required dust controls are not used or maintained.*
 - *the operator's dust sampling is not done properly.*

Mine Operator's Responsibilities

- Keep dust levels below standard on each shift, using environmental controls.
- Use and maintain all dust controls in the ventilation plan on every production shift.

(over)

BLACK LUNG KILLS!

- Perform on-shift examinations to assure all required controls are in use and working properly.
- Conduct dust sampling under typical operating conditions by:
 - *properly maintaining sampling equipment including cleaning and inspecting sampling head assemblies.*
 - *following the regulatory requirements for proper collection of dust samples.*
 - *taking dust samples bi-monthly and submitting the required number of samples for testing.*
 - *submitting samples that reflect dust conditions under normal work activities.*
 - *not altering, opening, or tampering with dust samples.*
 - *posting sample results on the mine bulletin board for 31 days.*
- Make NIOSH-approved respirators available when excessive dust levels are present.
- Report to MSHA any status changes that affect dust sampling within 3 days.
- Train miners, at least annually, on:
 - *the health hazards of breathing respirable coal mine dust.*
 - *the purpose of effective dust sampling and dust controls.*
 - *the mandatory health standards that apply to their mine.*
 - *the health provisions of the Mine Safety and Health Act.*
 - *the dust control portion of the approved ventilation plan.*
- Emphasize the importance of participating in the NIOSH X-ray program.

—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.

