

Continuous Miner Operator



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

Health Hazard Information Card HH-42

Breathing mine air containing harmful levels of respirable coal mine dust causes black lung and other lung diseases. The greatest sources of respirable dust at continuous mining operations are the continuous mining machine and roof bolter. If this dust is not adequately controlled, machine operators and anyone downwind can be exposed to excessive dust levels. If quartz particles are present, these miners are at greater risk of developing disabling lung diseases.

ALWAYS:

- Know the dust control portions of the mine's approved ventilation plan.
- Be sure that a complete on-shift examination of respirable dust controls has taken place before production begins.
- Correct any problems before production begins or continues when "hot seating."
- Maintain proper face ventilation.
- Maintain all water sprays on the miner as specified.

(over)

BLACK LUNG KILLS!

- Maintain dust scrubber system in proper operating condition.
- Perform required maintenance checks of the dust scrubber.
- Follow good work practices by positioning yourself in a safe location and in fresh air.
- Check the operator bimonthly dust sampling results posted on the mine bulletin board.
- Use a properly fitted NIOSH-approved respirator when needed. (**Remember**, MSHA does **not** accept respirators as a primary means of dust control.)
- Participate in your mine's free, confidential chest 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 Web site at www.msha.gov.

