



# Safety Alert

## Freeze-Thaw Hazards

Freeze-thaw cycles rapidly change ground and workplace conditions, creating hazards for miners. Water freezing in cracks expands and loosens material, increasing the risk of rock falls, highwall failures, and unstable roadways. Ice, mud, and poor traction make travel hazardous. Unrecognized freeze-thaw hazards have contributed to serious mining injuries and fatalities.



### Best Practices

- Conduct examinations of highwalls, pit walls, banks, and slopes before work begins, after precipitation and freezing temperatures, and during thaw periods.
- Inspect for loose rock, sloughing ground, cracks and separations, overhangs, and bulging or movement.
- Do not work or travel under unsupported or loose material.
- Scale hazardous material from a safe location.
- Barricade and post unsafe areas until hazards are corrected.
- Maintain clean catch benches and rockfall areas.
- Update and follow all Ground Control Plan procedures.

**Report accidents and hazardous conditions: 1-800-746-1553**

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