



Fatality #3 - February 7, 2013
Hoisting - Underground - West Virginia
Affinity Coal Company, LLC - Affinity Mine

COAL MINE FATALITY - On Thursday, February 7, 2013, at approximately 9:20 p.m., a 43-year-old utility man was killed when he was pinned underneath the scoop he was operating at the bottom of a service shaft. The victim and two other miners were unloading trash from a scoop bucket insert with the scoop bucket positioned on the hoist platform. The hoist unexpectedly started moving up the shaft. This raised the front end of the scoop, which slipped away from the hoist deck and fell suddenly. The victim was found underneath the operator's deck of the scoop.



Best Practices

- Ensure that an adequate delay time is provided between the activation of visual and/or audible alarms and the movement of the hoist, so that workers can react and move clear of dangerous areas.
- Conduct thorough examinations of all hoisting equipment and safety mechanisms on a daily basis. Ensure that persons conducting these examinations are trained adequately and any deficiencies identified are corrected immediately.
- Discuss work procedures and identify all hazards associated with the work to be performed along with the methods to properly protect persons.
- Communicate work activities prior to beginning the work and maintain communications during the work activity.
- Develop and implement a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the safe operation of service hoists and man hoists, train all of the miners involved in hoisting operations, and post these procedures near the hoist control panels in a conspicuous location.
- Provide redundant safety mechanisms that provide a more fail proof check of the system before the hoist can be operated.
- When possible, secure the cage mechanically to prevent cage motion due to suspension rope stretch during loading or other unintended motion.
- Design Electrical safety circuits so that an open circuit does not represent a safe condition and the functioning of the safety circuit should not be solely dependent on a single programmable electronic system.
- Ensure that the hoist is inoperable during loading and unloading operations.

This is the third fatality reported during calendar year 2013 in the coal mining industry. As of this date in 2012, there was one fatality reported in coal mining. This is the first fatality classified as Hoisting in 2013. At this time in 2012, there was no fatality in this classification.

The information provided in this notice is based on preliminary data ONLY and does not represent final determinations regarding the nature of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality.
