

Fatalgram

COAL MINE FATALITY -- On Tuesday, June 13, 2017, a 32-year-old continuous mining machine operator was fatally injured when he was pinned between the cutter head of a remote controlled continuous mining machine and the coal rib. The victim was backing the continuous mining machine from the working face when the accident occurred.



Best Practices

- Avoid “RED ZONE” areas when operating or working near a remote controlled continuous mining machine. Ensure all personnel including the equipment operator are outside the machine turning radius before starting or moving the equipment. STAY OUT of RED ZONES.
- Maintain a safe distance from any moving equipment and frequently review avoiding Red Zone areas. Position the conveyor boom and the cutter head away from yourself or other miners working in the area or when moving the machine.
- Tram or reposition a remote controlled continuous mining machine from the rear of the machine to prevent disorientation. Never position yourself between the face and the continuous mining machine when the machine is on.
- Disable the continuous mining machine pump motor before handling trailing cables or positioning trailing cable tie-offs onto the machine.
- Develop Safe Operating Procedures for tramming, repositioning, or moving remote-controlled continuous mining machines.

For Machines Equipped with Proximity Detection Systems

- Correct proximity detection system malfunctions when they occur and only use “Emergency Stop Override” to move the continuous mining machine to a safe location for repairs.

- Perform recommended manufacturer's dynamic test to ensure the proximity detection system is functioning properly. Verify that the shutdown zones are at sufficient distances to stop the machine before contacting a miner.
- Mine wearable components should be worn securely at all times in accordance with manufacturer recommendations and in a manner so warning lights and sounds can be seen and heard.

This is the eighth fatality reported in 2017 in the coal mining industry and it is the first accident to be classified as machinery. As of this date in 2016, six fatalities were reported, with two in this classification.