Fatality Alert

MSHA MINE FATALITY – On May 22, 2019, a 48-year-old continuous mining machine operator with 12 years of experience was severely injured when a section of coal/rock rib measuring, 48 to 54" long, 24" wide, and 28" thick, fell and pinned him to the mine floor. At the time of the accident, the victim was in the process of taking the second cut of a crosscut and was moving the mining machine cable that was adjacent to the coal/rock rib. The victim was hospitalized and due to complications associated with his injuries, passed away 8 days later.

Best Practices

- Install rib bolts with adequate surface area coverage, during the mining cycle, and in a consistent pattern for the best protection against rib falls.
- Follow the requirements in the approved roof control plan, and remember it contains minimum safety requirements. Install additional support when rib fractures or other abnormalities are detected. Revise the plan if conditions change and cause the support system to no longer be adequate.
- Be aware of potential hazards when working or traveling near mine ribs, especially when geologic conditions (such as thick in-seam rock partings) could cause rib hazards. Take additional safety precautions while working in these conditions. Correct all hazardous conditions before allowing miners to work or travel in these areas.
- Perform complete and thorough examinations of pillar corners, particularly where the angle formed between an entry and a crosscut is less than 90 degrees.
- Adequately support loose ribs or scale loose rib material from a safe location using a bar of suitable length and design.
- Task train all miners to conduct thorough examinations of the roof, face, and ribs where persons will be working or traveling and to correct all hazardous conditions before miners work or travel in such areas. Continuously watch for changing conditions and conduct more frequent examinations when abnormal conditions are present.

This is the 9th MSHA fatality reported in calendar year 2019. As of this date in 2018, there were 8 MSHA fatalities reported. This is the 1st Fall of Face, Rib, Side or Highwall accident classification fatality in 2019. There was one Fall of Face, Rib, Side or Highwall accident classification fatality during the same period in 2018.