

MNMM Fatal 2012-13

- Fall of Person Accident
- September 22, 2012 (Arizona)
- Copper Operation
- Contract Laborer
- 34 years old
- 6 days of experience

Overview

The victim was killed when he fell through an opening on the 4th floor of the secondary crusher building and landed approximately 30 feet below. The opening was covered with 2-inch by 4-inch by 102-inch boards and 3/4-inch thick plywood that was being used as a work platform. When the victim stepped onto the platform, two of the boards broke and he fell. A screen was attached over the 6-foot by 8-foot opening but had been removed for repairs.

The accident occurred due to mine and contract management's failure to ensure the work platform, covering the hole where the victim fell, was of substantial construction, barricaded, and provided with warning signs to prevent a fall hazard to persons working in the secondary crusher building. The accident occurred in an area where the victim was not assigned to work. Statements made during interviews indicate he was missing for approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes before a search began. The victim had six days of experience on the job.



Root Cause

Root Cause: Mine and contract management failed to ensure the work platform covering the hole where the victim fell was of substantial construction, barricaded, and provided with warning signs to prevent a fall hazard to any person working in the secondary crusher building.

Corrective Action: Mine management instituted a policy of using engineered metal covers on all accessible open holes to prevent a future fall hazard to miners. An improved system is in place using signs and barricades to warn and prevent access to hazardous areas that are not immediately obvious to persons.

Best Practices

- Establish and discuss safe work procedures. Identify and control all hazards. Train all persons to recognize and understand safe job procedures before beginning work.
- Always use fall protection when working where a fall hazard exists.
- Protect openings near travelways through which persons may fall by installing appropriately designed railings, barriers, or covers.
- Keep temporary access opening covers secured in place at all times when the opening is not being used. Replace deteriorated floor plating and grating.
- Ensure that areas are barricaded or have warning signs posted at all approaches if hazards exist that are not immediately obvious.