



Fatality #2 - February 14, 2012
Fall of Face/Rib/Highwall - Alabama - Common Shale Mining
Rare Red Rock - Rare Red Rock

METAL/NONMETAL MINE FATALITY - On February 14, 2012, a 40 year-old mine owner with 8 years of experience was killed at a shale operation. The victim was operating an excavator with a rock breaker attachment. He was breaking and mining material from a near vertical wall when the face fell onto the cab of the excavator, crushing him.



Best Practices

- Operate excavators with the cab and tracks perpendicular to, and away from, the highwall.
- Bench or slope the material to maintain stability and to safely accommodate the type of equipment used. Do not undercut material on the face of a slope, bank, or highwall.
- Examine highwalls, slopes, and banks from as many perspectives as possible (bottom, sides, and top/crest) while maintaining the safety of the examiner(s). Look for signs of cracking, bulging, sliding, toppling or other signs of instability. Record the type and location of hazardous conditions.
- Use auxiliary lighting during non-daylight hours to conduct highwall examinations and to illuminate active work areas.
- Perform supplemental examinations of highwalls, banks, benches, and sloping terrain in the working area.
- Immediately remove all personnel exposed to hazardous ground conditions and promptly correct the unsafe conditions. When the conditions can not be corrected, barricade and post signs to prevent entry.
- Remove loose or overhanging material from the face. Correct hazardous conditions by working from a safe location.

This is the 2nd fatality reported in calendar year 2012 in the metal and nonmetal mining industries. As of this date in 2011, there was 1 fatality reported in these industries. This is the 1st Fall of Highwall fatality in 2012. There were no Fall of Highwall fatalities in the same period in 2011.

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.
