

MNM Fatal 2016-07

- Inundation
- June 3, 2016 (Mississippi)
- Sand and Gravel
- Hydromet EW Operator
- 24 years old
- 39 weeks of experience

MNM Fatal 2016-08

- Inundation
- June 3, 2016 (Mississippi)
- Sand and Gravel
- Excavator Operator
- 56 years old
- 6 years of experience

Overview

James “Dee” Hemphill, Dirt Crew Supervisor (age 56), and Emmitt Shorter, Haul Truck Driver (age 24), were killed on June 3, 2016, when the wall of the Johnson Pit failed and inundated the pit with liquefied slurry, engulfing the two miners.

The accident occurred because the mine operator failed to ensure: 1) the impoundment embankment was substantially constructed; 2) that barricades and warning signs were in place to prevent access or continued mining in the hazardous area of the pit; 3) that mining did not ensure wall, bank, or slope stability; and 4) that adequate examinations and corrective actions were implemented to ensure the safety of the miners.



Best Practices

- Make sure that embankments containing ponds of water, tailings, processing waste, or other fluids are designed and constructed to be stable, and that mining operations are kept a safe distance away.
- Provide hazard training to all personnel working on or near an impoundment to recognize hazards associated with the impoundment, such as surface cracks or piping, and to recognize adverse conditions and environmental factors that can decrease stability before beginning work.
- Embankments adjoining workplaces and travelways should be examined weekly or more often if changing ground conditions warrant.
- Adverse weather, such as heavy rain, may introduce or increase hazardous conditions associated with impoundments, highwalls, and embankments. Workplace examinations should be increased when these hazards are present to recognize changing conditions.
- Before beginning work, conduct a workplace exam from as many perspectives as possible (bottom, sides, and top/crest) of ground conditions that could create a hazard to persons and repair, support or remove if found immediately. Correct hazardous conditions by working from a safe location.