

MNM Fatal 2016-10

- Fall of Face, Rib, Pillar or Highwall
- July 25, 2016 (Tennessee)
- Limestone Mine
- Excavator Operator
- 59 years old
- 17 years of experience

Overview

On July 25, 2016, James T. Lynn (age 59) was killed when rock from a highwall, approximately 80 feet above, fell on the operator's cab of the hydraulic excavator that he was operating.

The accident occurred because the operator's mining methods did not maintain wall stability where the victim was working. The operator failed to take down or support hazardous ground conditions before work commenced in the area and failed to identify hazardous ground conditions during examinations in the work area prior to work commencing.



Best Practices

- Operate excavators with the cab perpendicular to, and swinging away from, the highwall.
- Examine highwalls from as many perspectives as possible (bottom, sides, and top/crest) while maintaining the safety of the examiner(s). Look for signs of cracking or other geologic discontinuities.
- Maintain access to the top of highwalls so that thorough examinations can be conducted.
- Perform supplemental examinations of highwalls, banks, benches, and sloping terrain in the working area during and following inclement weather.
- Immediately remove all personnel exposed to hazardous ground conditions, barricade, and/or post signs to prevent entry, and promptly correct unsafe conditions.
- Use mining methods that ensure highwall stability and safe working conditions.
- Look, Listen and Evaluate your highwall and pit conditions daily, especially after each rain, freeze, or thaw.
- Establish and discuss safe work procedures for working near highwalls. Be your own examiner and find hazards before they find you.
- Refer to PIB P10-09 'Safety Precautions for Operating Rubber Tired and Track-Mounted Excavators' for additional information regarding hazards related to operating excavators at surface mines.