



MAY 31 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRICT MANAGERS

FROM:

TRW TIMOTHY R. WATKINS *Gregory B. Miller*
Deputy Administrator for
Coal Mine Safety and Health

SUBJECT:

2017 Preventive Roof/Rib Outreach Program

Improvements in roof control technology have led to a significant reduction in roof fall accidents and fatalities. Despite these gains, roof and rib falls continue to be a leading cause of accidents and injuries in underground coal mines. MSHA's Preventive Roof/Rib Outreach Program (PROP) is intended to increase awareness of the hazards that can lead to roof and rib fall accidents and injuries and the precautions necessary to prevent them.

"Continuous Mining Machine Operator Safety" is the theme for this year's initiative. This theme was chosen because since 2013 there have been 5 continuous mining machine operator fatalities. During the same time period, an additional 83 continuous mining machine operators have been injured as a result of roof and rib falls, or coal burst. This initiative is to commence at the beginning of June and continue throughout September.

To assist you with this initiative, informational posters have been developed that inspectors are to distribute to underground mines. These posters identify roof and rib related hazards and list possible solutions. There are sufficient posters for each underground mine to receive two posters. A list of "Points to Remember" posters have also been produced. This information should be used by the inspectors while giving safety talks to the miners concerning roof and rib hazards. There are sufficient lists of points to remember posters for each underground mine to receive two posters.

During this outreach effort, inspectors and specialists are asked to distribute these items to the mines and talk with miners and mine management about the hazards associated with roof and rib falls. They should also discuss best practices for preventing these types of accidents. This initiative is to be incorporated into E01 inspections.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Johnny P. Calhoun, Division of Safety at (202) 693-9507.