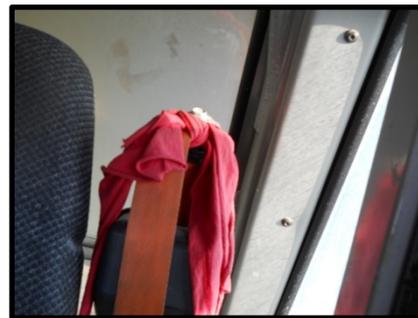


## **Seat Belt Tampering Alert**

Millions of American drivers risk death and dismemberment daily by operating automobiles on highways without using seat belts. It is no surprise that miners operating heavy equipment off-road and at low speeds sometimes fail to “Buckle Up for Safety.” When worn properly, retractable restraints stop drivers from lurching forward or being ejected during a crash. When disabled, not worn or worn improperly, retractable restraints can contribute to accidents with deadly results.

MSHA inspectors recently identified a retractable restraints hazard during a fatal accident investigation involving an operator who was not wearing a seat belt. The operator’s lap and shoulder belts were tied off with rags, so as to prevent the restraints from retracting and operating as designed. This hazard can cause the seat’s lap and shoulder belt to remain loose and unrestricted, thus allowing the driver to move uncontrollably inside the cab in the event of an accident. The investigation of the fatality showed that the mine operator knew that drivers tampered with restraints.



During the month of October, we are asking inspectors to make it a point to check for this hazard and take the appropriate enforcement action.

