



Fatality #7 - June 9, 2011
Slip/Fall of Person - Surface at Underground - Colorado
Mounta in Coal Company, L.L.C. - West Elk Mine

COAL MINE FATALITY - On Thursday, June 9, 2011, a 53 year-old contract steelworker, with over 16 years of coal mine experience, was killed when he fell approximately 8 feet from a steel beam. He hit a lower cross beam before he landed on a conveyor belt cover located about 32 inches below the cross beam. The victim had been engaged in cutting operations just prior to the fall, and was repositioning when he removed his lanyard tie-off safety device from the location where it was secured.



Best Practices

- Wear and use fall protection, maintaining 100 per cent tie off, when fall hazards exist. See http://www.msha.gov/Accident_Prevention/innovativeproducts/2009/TieOff.asp
- Ensure workers are trained and understand the proper use of restraint devices.
- Provide self retracting lanyard mechanisms when possible.
- Ensure secure footing in all work areas.
- Examine tools and personal protective equipment routinely and replace when defects or wear is evident.
- Conduct a risk assessment of the work area prior to beginning any task and identify all possible hazards. Use the SLAM; Stop, Look, Analyze, and Manage approach for work place safety.

This is the sixth fatality reported during calendar year 2011 in the coal mining industry. This is the first fatality classified as a Slip or Fall of Person accident in 2011. Thirty-seven coal mine fatalities occurred in 2010 within the same period. No Slip or Fall of Person fatalities occurred during the same period in 2010.

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.
