

**MSHA Job Safety Tips
ST Card No. 1**

Roof and Rib Safety in Coal Mines

INBY IS OUT!

Roof falls are a leading cause of mine fatalities. Most roof and rib accidents have occurred from:

- Miners traveling inby support.
- Inadequate or improper roof/rib examinations.
- Not following approved roof control plans.
- Improper body/hand positioning.
- Failure to communicate with other miners and mine management when adverse roof/rib conditions are found.
- Using improper tools and equipment to correct adverse roof conditions.

To prevent roof/rib accidents, miners should:

- Never go inby support for any reason.
- Be aware of roof and rib conditions examine roof and ribs wherever they work or travel.
- Know their approved roof control plan and follow it all the time.
- Make sure they are in a safe position before energizing or moving their machinery.
- Communicate unusual conditions to other miners and mine management.
- Use proper equipment when correcting adverse roof conditions.

In 1996 ten miners died in the Nation's coal mines as a result of falls of the mine roof and rib.

A brief summary of some of these fatalities follows:

February 7, 1996 -- A portion of the rock brow and coal rib above a

mechanic and loading machine operator fell, fatally injuring the loading machine operator. The accident occurred because the overhanging brow and coal rib were not properly evaluated and taken down or supported.

June 26, 1996 -- A roof fall occurred during the mining of a final pushout on a pillar block resulting in fatal injuries to a continuous miner operator. The accident occurred as a result of premature roof fall caused by a combination of poor roof conditions and extended time to mine the pillar, which sat 7 hours between shifts.

August 15, 1996 -- A general laborer was fatally injured when he traveled inby permanent roof supports to shovel loose coal along the ribs of a crosscut.

September 18, 1996 -- A roof bolter, while assisting a roof bolting machine operator was struck and fatally injured by a roof fall. The accident occurred because the victim was working under unsupported roof.

October 29, 1996 -- A shuttle car operator was tramming a shuttle car to a continuous miner when a rock fell causing fatal injuries to him. The accident occurred because the roof was not adequately supported.

INBY IS OUT!

U.S. Department of Labor
Mine Safety and Health Administration