

**COAL MINE FATALITY** - On Monday, September 15, 2014, a 53-year old bulldozer operator, with 28 years of experience, sustained fatal injuries when the bulldozer he was operating went over the edge of an approximately 50-foot highwall. The victim was preparing a bench for drilling when the accident occurred.



### **Best Practices**

- Be familiar with the work environment. Before beginning work, walk around and check the area. Plan the safest way to move the material and maneuver the equipment.
- Train all employees adequately on the equipment they operate, safe work procedures, hazard recognition, and hazard avoidance.
- Be attentive to changes in ground conditions and visibility. Watch for surface cracks and loose material.
- Keep the dozer blade between you and the edge when operating close to drop offs. Dump loads short of the highwall edge and push one load into another to maintain a safe distance from the edge.
- Maintain all equipment window glass clean and in good repair.
- Maintain a safe distance from the edge of the highwall. Use a spotter or other technology to assist equipment operators when working near highwalls.
- Perform additional checks during the work shift to ensure ground conditions have not changed when the edge of a slope cannot be seen from the operator's position
- Ensure that personnel operating mobile equipment always wear a seat belt.
- Monitor work activities to assure safe work procedures are followed.

This is the tenth fatality reported in calendar year 2014 in the coal mining industry and it is classified as Machinery. As of this date in 2013 there were fourteen fatalities reported in the coal mining industry. At this time in 2013 there were four fatalities in this classification.