



**Fatality #12 – October 7, 2014**  
**Fall of Highwall - Surface Mine - Kentucky**  
**Commonwealth Mining LLC; Tinsley Branch HWM 61**

**COAL MINE FATALITY** - On Tuesday, October 7, 2014, a 31-year-old utility worker, with 13 years of mining experience, was killed after he crawled 37 feet into an entry mined with a highwall mining machine to retrieve a broken cutter-head-chain from the mining machine. A rock, 8 feet wide, 6 feet long, and 16 inches thick fell on him. He was initially transported to a local hospital and was being airlifted to a larger medical facility when he died.



**Best Practices**

- Never go under unsupported roof.
- Never enter a hole mined with a highwall mining machine or auger without a specific, detailed, and approved plan to do so.
- Develop a plan to remotely retrieve any part of a highwall mining machine caught or left in an entry. The plan must specify methods which do not expose miners to hazards. Train all personnel in such plans.
- Know and follow the provisions of the established Ground Control Plan.
- Establish Ground Control Plans for highwall mining operations that ensure safety and address web spacing, depth of penetration, and confined work areas.
- Keep all equipment in proper working order by establishing and implementing maintenance schedules.

This is the twelfth fatality reported in calendar year 2014 in the coal mining industry and it is classified as Fall of Face, Rib, or Highwall. As of this date in 2013 there were 17 fatalities reported in the coal mining industry. At this time in 2013 there was 1 fatality in this classification.