



U.S. Department of Labor

Mine Safety and Health Administration



Protecting Miners' Safety and Health Since 1978

SAFETY ALERT

Blocking Against Motion

Since September 16, 2015 three serious accidents involving mining equipment and machinery have resulted in fatalities. A miner was fatally injured when he positioned himself between the cutter boom and the pan of a continuous mining machine when the blocking under the cutter head failed allowing the cutter head to collapse. The second fatality occurred when a miner became entangled in a moving conveyor belt while changing out a hold up roller. The third miner was fatally injured when the hydraulic pressure of the diesel front end loader released, pinning the miner between the bottom of the machine and the mine floor.



BEST PRACTICES

- Conduct examinations from safe locations to identify hydraulic leaks and mechanical damage, and ensure repairs are conducted in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations. Verify the release of all stored energy before initiating repairs.
- Never work under an unsupported load and never depend on hydraulics to support a load.
- No work shall be performed under machinery or equipment that has been raised until such machinery or equipment has been securely blocked in position. 75.1726 (b) & 77.405 (b)
- Use a lifting device compatible with the load being lifted and ensure blocking material is competent, substantial, and adequate to support and stabilize the load. Always use manufacturers safety devices or features for securing components against motion and secure assemblies that rotate to prevent movement..
- Never perform work on a moving conveyor belt. Always lock and tag out belts before performing maintenance or repairs.
- Repairs or maintenance shall not be performed on machinery until the power is off and the machinery is blocked against motion, except where machinery motion is necessary to make adjustments. 75.1725 (c) & 77.404 (c).
- Complete a Risk Assessment to evaluate pivot points and ask, "What can happen?"