
Close Call Accident Alerts

The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) publishes incident reports from mine sites throughout the United States. These reports are aimed at increasing awareness of mine-site hazards as well as outlining best safety practices. Following are two recent incidents showcasing common potential hazards on surface mine sites such as gravel pits.

Falling Debris

On October 16, 2017, a miner was loading haul trucks when the cab of his excavator was struck by material falling from a 65-foot bank failure. The miner was not injured.

Best Practices

- Operate excavators with the cab perpendicular to, and swinging away from, the highwall.
- Train all persons to recognize adverse conditions and environmental factors that can decrease highwall stability and understand safe job procedures to eliminate all hazards before beginning work.
- Examine highwalls and material piles from as many perspectives as possible (bottom, sides, and top/crest) while maintaining the safety of the examiner(s). Look for cracking, displacement, or other signs of distress.
- Maintain safe access to the top of highwalls so that thorough examinations can be conducted.
- Perform supplemental examinations of highwalls, banks, benches, and sloping terrain in the working area during and following inclement weather.
- Immediately remove all personnel exposed to hazardous ground conditions, barricade and post signs to prevent entry, and promptly correct unsafe conditions.
- Use mining methods that ensure highwall and bank stability and safe working conditions. Avoid undercutting and/or oversteepening of the highwall or bank slope. Mine only material that freely flows down.

Electrical Shock

On October 11, 2017, a miner received an electrical shock while working in a 480-volt electrical control panel for a portable crusher without locking and tagging out the circuit. The injured miner was transported to a local hospital, treated, and released.

Best Practices

- Develop, communicate, and follow a written plan before performing electrical work to ensure that safety is maximized for all miners involved in the task.
- Prior to conducting any electrical work, identify hazards, establish safe limits of approach, and determine appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) ratings.
- Wear properly rated and well-maintained PPE.
- Before working on equipment, always de-energize, lock and tag out the circuit with your lock and tag.
- Test to ensure electrical circuits are de-energized using properly rated test equipment prior to performing work.
- Use properly rated electrical meters and non-contact voltage testers to ensure electrical circuits are deenergized prior to performing electrical work.

What This Means for Counties

Maintaining a safe worksite is the responsibility of all employees. Proper training and safety precautions are necessary to prevent the loss of time, equipment, and lives. CTSI offers a range of certified MSHA safety classes to help you maintain a safe jobsite and workforce. A list of available classes can be found at: <http://www.ctsi.org/lpclasses/ClassList.pdf>. Please contact CTSI Loss Prevention at 303-861-0507 to schedule a class. 