

Mine Safety Agency Issues Alert after Mining Deaths

February 22, 2017

Practices

Workplace Safety and Health

The Mine Safety and Health Administration has issued a “[fatal accidents alert](#)” after two separate mining accidents claimed the lives of two miners within a 24-hour period. The alert lists best practices to avoid accidents.

The safety agency said the victims in the two incidents were working alone and in restricted areas with hazardous conditions.

MSHA said that on January 25, 2017, material from a rib fell on a miner in an area of an underground limestone mine that had been barricaded to prevent entry due to bad roof and rib conditions. A rib is a part of the side of a pillar or the wall of an entry. After he did not emerge from the mine at the end of the shift, the miner was found under the material that had fallen on him.

The next day, on January 26, 2017, MSHA said that a coal miner was discovered entangled at a conveyor belt drive after he also did not emerge from a mine at the end of his shift.

MSHA’s list of best practices include:

- Never enter hazardous areas that have been “dangered-off” or identified as prohibited entry.
- Develop and train miners on a method that clearly alerts miners not to enter hazardous areas.
- If possible, miners should not work alone. If working alone, communicate intended movements to a responsible person.
- Before beginning any task, identify known and potential hazards.
- Never perform work on a moving conveyor belt.
- Make certain that equipment guards are adequate and secure to prevent miners from contacting moving machine parts.
- Before working on equipment, de-energize electrical power, lock and tag the visual disconnect with your lock and tag, and block parts that can move against motion.

Jackson Lewis attorneys are available to assist clients with their worker safety programs.

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