

# CALL TO SAFETY

## Three fatalities in the first 19 days of 2016 in the Nations Coal Mines.

In 2015 coal fatalities were at their lowest levels ever. However, in the first 19 days of 2016, three coal miners lost their lives in three separate coal mine accidents. As a result, MSHA is issuing a **CALL TO SAFETY** for the Nation's coal mine operators and miners to take a much needed look at compliance. The last time the nation had experienced this number of coal mine accidents in such a short time frame was in 2006 when 15 miners lost their lives between January 2, 2006 and January 19, 2006. This recent rash of fatal accidents is a **WAKE UP CALL** to the nation's miners to take notice and take care of themselves.

**Fatal No.1 On January 4, 2016 a 53 year old miner received fatal injuries when he became entangled in a moving underground belt. The victim was preparing to change out a hold up roller when he was caught by the moving belt and roller.**

- Always identify safety hazards before beginning any task
- Never perform work on a moving conveyor belt. Cross moving conveyor belts only where there are suitable crossing facilities.
- Ensure that power is off with a visual disconnect before any work is performed, use your own lock and tag.
- Ensure that machinery is blocked against motion before performing maintenance or repairs.

**Fatal No.2 On January 16, 2016 a 31 year old mining machine operator was fatally injured when a section of coal/rock rib pinned him to the mine floor.**

- Conduct thorough examinations of the roof, face, and ribs where persons will be working and traveling. Be alert for changing conditions. Report abnormal roof or rib conditions to mine management.
- Danger off hazardous areas until appropriate corrective measures can be taken.
- Be aware of potential hazards at all times when working or traveling near ribs, especially close clearance between ribs and equipment.
- Adequately support or scale any loose roof or rib material from a safe location.
- Know and follow the approved roof control plan and provide additional support when cracks or other abnormalities are detected. Remember, the approved roof control plan contains minimum requirements.

**Fatal No.3 On January 19, 2016 a 36 year old mining machine operator was fatally injured between the mining machine and the coal rib.**

- Avoid "RED ZONE" areas when operating or working near a continuous mining machine, especially when moving a remote controlled continuous mining machine. Frequently review, retrain, and discuss avoiding "RED ZONE" areas (<http://www.msha.gov/Alerts/20040407REDZONE2.pdf>).
- Install and maintain proximity detection systems to protect personnel and eliminate accidents of this type. See the proximity detection information page on the MSHA website ([http://www.msha.gov/Accident\\_Prevention/NewTechnologies/ProximityDetection/ProximitydetectionSingleSource.as](http://www.msha.gov/Accident_Prevention/NewTechnologies/ProximityDetection/ProximitydetectionSingleSource.as)).
- Ensure all miners, including the continuous mining machine operator, are outside the machine's turning radius before starting or moving equipment.
- Stay behind moving mobile equipment when traveling in the same entry, and maintain a safe distance from any moving equipment.
- Assign another miner to assist the continuous mining machine operator when the machine is being moved or repositioned. Develop and follow effective policies and procedures for starting and tramming self-propelled equipment. Train all miners regarding these policies and procedures.

In light of current market conditions, we all need to be mindful that safety and health protections necessary to protect our nation's miners need to be in place every day at every coal mine in the country. Every miner deserves to work his or her shift and return home at the end of the day, safe and healthy.