



**Fatality #1 - January 6, 2007**  
**Handling Material - Underground - CO**  
**Oxbow Mining, LLC - Elk Creek Mine**

**COAL MINE FATALITY** - On Saturday, January 6, 2007, a 26-year old utilityman/laborer was fatally injured while attempting to load a bundle of wire mesh onto a scoop. Four bundles of wire mesh weighing approximately 6000 pounds connected by metal straps were stacked against the rib in an upright position. The utilityman was positioned between a scoop and the bundles of wire mesh. While cutting the metal straps, the wire mesh fell over pinning the utilityman against the scoop causing fatal injuries. The victim had approximately 2 years of mining experience and 14 weeks of experience at this mine and at this activity.



**Best Practices**

- Ensure that materials are safely stored and properly handled.
- Before performing a materials handling job, consider all possible hazards and devise methods to safely complete the task. Utilize the SLAM risk program when performing duties involving large objects, massive weights or the release of stored energy.
- Ensure that there is adequate space to work.
- When possible open banded materials while they are resting in a horizontal position.
- Never work in the fall path of objects/materials of massive weights having the potential of becoming off-balanced while in the upright position.
- When working with or on extremely heavy objects/materials placed in an upright position, use a positive means to prevent objects/materials from falling, or moving.

This is the first fatality reported during calendar year 2007 in the coal mining industry. As of this date in 2006, there were 12 fatalities reported in coal mining. This is the first fatality classified as Handling Material in 2007. At this time in 2006, there were no fatalities in this classification.