



**Fatality #16 - August 17, 2004**  
**Fall of Face, Rib, Pillar or Highwall - Underground - WV**  
**McElroy Coal Company - McElroy Mine**

**COAL MINE FATALITY** - On Tuesday, August 17, 2004, a 57-year old continuous mining machine integral roof bolter operator with 13 years of mining experience was fatally injured in a rib roll accident. The crew had mined a crosscut through (from no. 5 to no. 6 entry) when the miner operator warned the victim the rib was working. The victim withdrew approximately 3 feet outby the right side rib protector shield, toward the rear of the continuous mining machine, when the rib rolled and pinned him against the machine. The rock and coal rib that fell measured approximately 20 feet long by 5 feet high and up to 10 inches thick.



**Best Practices**

- Examine the roof and ribs frequently while working.
- Take down or adequately support any loose ribs or roof before working or traveling in the affected area.
- Stay aware of changing roof and rib conditions and position yourself in a safe location.
- Remain within the confines of any protective device such as cabs, canopies and rib protectors as much as possible.

This is the 16<sup>th</sup> fatality reported in calendar year 2004 in the coal mining industry. As of this date in 2003, there were 21 fatalities reported in coal mining. This is the first fatality classified as Fall of Rib in 2004. There was one Fall of Rib fatality at this time in 2003.