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GENERAL INFORMATION

Coal Mine Fatal Accident 2007-04



Operator:	Double E Augering Inc.
Mine:	No. 3
Accident Date:	March 12, 2007
Classification:	Machinery
Location:	Dist. 6, Pike County, Kentucky
Mine Type:	Surface Coal Mine
Employment:	5
Production:	200 Tons/Day

ACCIDENT DESCRIPTION



At approximately 4:00 p.m. on March 12, 2007 a 47-year old foreman/excavator operator with 29 years mining experience received fatal injuries when the track-mounted excavator which he had been operating overturned from an elevated mine bench. The victim had been loading and moving shot rock overburden while positioned on the narrow

bench, digging toward the excavator. The excavator was positioned with the left (operator's) side track on the edge of the upper bench, when he began trying to reposition the machine away from the edge by using the boom. When down pressure was applied to the boom, the rear portion of the track went over the edge of the bench and the excavator began to roll over onto the lower bench. As the excavator continued rolling over, the cab was crushed and the victim was fatally injured. The accident occurred because the width of the elevated mine bench was not sufficient to insure safe operation of the excavator.

ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

Root Cause: The standards, policies and procedures used by the mine operator did not ensure that safe working conditions were provided for the employees at all times. The width of the elevated mine bench was not sufficient to provide safe working conditions for the equipment being used and the operation being performed.

Corrective Action: The mine operator developed a plan to prevent a similar occurrence of this accident. The ground control plan was revised to show when track-mounted equipment is being operated parallel to the outslope from an elevated bench on in-place shot material, the width of the bench will be a minimum of 1.5 times wider than the distance between the outside edges of the equipment tracks. The plan also requires training to be provided to the employees concerning the revised ground control plan and hazards associated with operating equipment from a mine bench.

ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS

§104(a) Citation No. 7426856 was issued to Double E Augering Inc. for a violation of 77.1003.

Condition or Practice:

"The width of the mine bench was not sufficient to insure safe operation of the John Deere 330C LC excavator.

The mine bench was measured to be 13 feet wide and the excavator tracks are 11 feet, 2 inches wide. The excavator was being operated on the edge of the bench in order to allow rotation of the deck.

On March 12, 2007, a foreman/excavator operator received fatal injuries as a result of the John Deere 330C LC excavator overturning from the elevated mine bench."

BEST PRACTICES

- Ensure that the size of the bench is compatible for the type of equipment used and the operation performed.
- Conduct a thorough visual examination of highwalls and spoil banks immediately before any work is performed and thereafter as conditions warrant.
- Provide rollover protection for equipment where conditions warrant.