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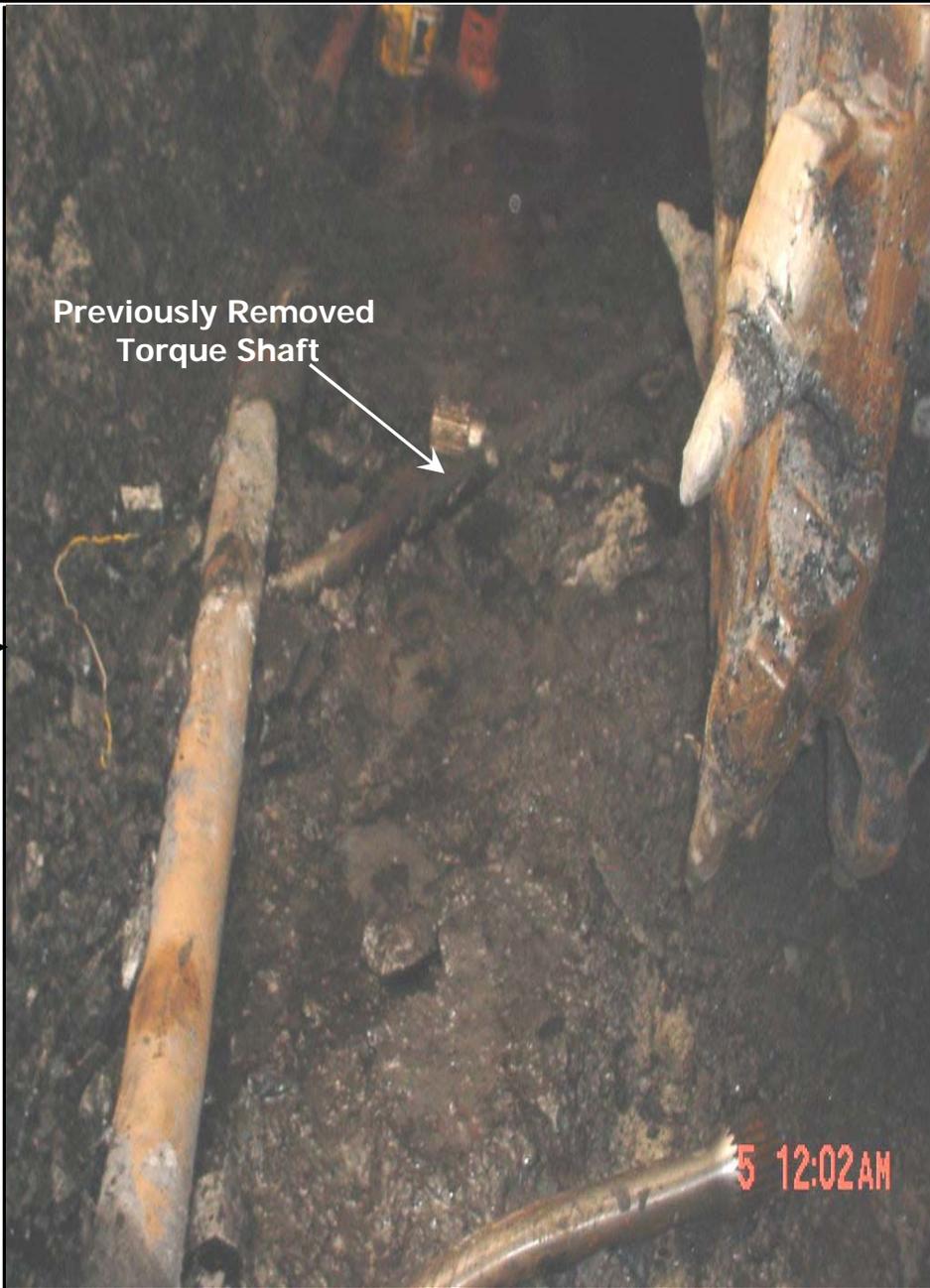
GENERAL INFORMATION

Coal Mine Fatal Accident 2007-11



Operator:	Rockhouse Creek Development, LLC
Mine:	No. 8
Accident Date:	August 4, 2007
Classification:	Machinery
Location:	Dist. 4, Mingo County, West Virginia
Mine Type:	Underground Coal Mine
Employment:	132
Production:	3,000 Tons/Day

ACCIDENT DESCRIPTION



At 6:15 p.m. on Saturday, August 4, 2007, a 25-year old foreman was fatally injured while assisting a mechanic in the replacement of a cutter motor torque shaft on a continuous mining machine. During the installation of the new torque shaft, the shaft became stuck in the operator's side of the cutting head motor. In an attempt to remove the shaft, as the motor was turning after being shut off, the shaft contacted the turning motor and rotated, striking the victim in the head and face..

ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

Root Cause: Improper procedures and unsafe work practices were used. The manufacturer's recommended procedure was not followed for the replacement of the continuous mining machine torque shafts. Electrical power was not disconnected, the torque shafts were not greased, and the torque shaft cap, snap ring, O-ring, clutch cover cap, and the cutter motor/clutch access door or cover were not replaced prior to the restoration of electrical power to the machine.

Corrective Action: Maintenance personnel were retrained in the proper procedures for replacing a cutter motor torque shaft. In addition, the mine operator established a policy where repairs or maintenance cannot be performed until all persons are in a safe location, and machine power is disconnected.

ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS Cont'd.

Root Cause: A miner was in close proximity to an unguarded, unsecured, rotating machine part while the continuous mining machine was energized.

Corrective Action: The mine operator established a policy where repairs or maintenance cannot be performed until all persons are in a safe location, and machine power is disconnected. All miners were trained in the new policy.

ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS

§ 104(d)(1) Citation No. 7266739 was issued to Rockhouse Creek Development, LCC for violation of 30 CFR Part 75.1725(c) stating in part, A repair was attempted on the Joy 14CM15 continuous mining machine, serial number JM 5948, while the machine power was on and the machine was in motion. The section foreman attempted to remove a stuck torque shaft from the right side of the continuous mining machine while the cutter motor was rotating.

During the repair, the rotating torque shaft contacted the foreman resulting in fatal injuries.

Although electrical power was interrupted from the cutter motor moments prior to the accident, electrical power remained on the machine, and the cutter motor continued to rotate. The cutter motor was not blocked against motion and machinery motion was not necessary to complete the repair.

BEST PRACTICES

- **Always disconnect electrical power connections, and lock-and-tag power receptacles to ensure machinery is disabled prior to repair or replacement of machine parts.**
- **Always maintain a safe distance from any moving machine parts.**
- **Always follow the equipment manufacturers recommended procedures for the removal and replacement of machine parts.**