



News Release

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MSHA releases preliminary fatality data for third quarter of 2015 *Seven miners die in third quarter of 2015; fewest coal deaths in a fiscal year*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Department of Labor’s [Mine Safety and Health Administration](#) today announced its summary of U.S. mining deaths from July 1 through Sept. 30, 2015 shows seven fatalities occurred in industry accidents. In the first nine months of 2015, 25 fatalities occurred, eight fewer than in the same period in 2014.

“These deaths remind us why we must continue our vigilance and ensure effective safety and health programs are at work throughout the industry,” said [Joseph A. Main](#), assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health. “The hard-working men and women of the mining industry deserve no less.”

On a fiscal year basis, preliminary data indicates that 14 miners died on the job at coal mines in FY 2015 (ended Sept. 30) – down from 18 deaths in FY 2014 – representing the fewest number of coal mining deaths in a fiscal year in coal mining history. In metal and nonmetal mining, 23 miners died in FY 2015, six fewer than during the previous fiscal year.

Of the seven miners who died in the third quarter, two were victims of [coal mining accidents](#) and five perished in [metal and nonmetal mining accidents](#). Brief descriptions of accidents follow:

- A 29-year-old electrician at a [Kentucky coal mine](#) died while replacing a load-locking valve on the cutter head jack of a continuous mining machine. The cutter head collapsed, fatally crushing the miner.
- A 58-year-old bulldozer operator at [Alabama coal mine](#) was found lying unconscious next to a bulldozer. Mine personnel administered first aid immediately, continuing medical treatment until emergency personnel arrived. After an airlift to the hospital, the man died from his injuries nine days later.
- A 26-year old miner died after the forward end of a drill steel on a machine struck him while traveling up a slope at an underground [Nevada gold mine](#). The drill steel struck a rib, causing it to push back toward the drill operator.
- A 50-year-old superintendent drowned at an [Ohio sand and gravel dredging operation](#). The victim and one other miner were attempting to dislodge a clam shell bucket from the bottom of the pond when the dredge capsized. The injured miner swam to shore and summoned assistance; his co-worker’s body was recovered eight days later.
- An 18-year-old seasonal worker died at a [Virginia granite mine](#) when the silo he was standing under collapsed and buried him beneath falling material.

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- A 64-year-old miner operating a front-end loader died working on a 35-foot high stockpile at a [North Dakota sand and gravel operation](#). When the miner exited the loader, the stockpile slope failed and engulfed him.
- A 25-year-old contractor died at a [Georgia kaolin processing plant](#) after he entered a railcar alone to wash out residual product, and was found later unresponsive still inside the railcar.

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