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Lowering Miners' Exposure to Respirable Coal Mine Dust, Including Continuous Personal Dust Monitors

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Lowering Miners' Exposure to Respirable Coal Mine Dust, Including Continuous Personal Dust Monitors

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Comment from Mac Porter, Retired

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General Comment

There need to be efforts and research extended to other avenues available to reduce Respirable Dust Exposure other than just water and ventilation measures. I worked as an operator and also as an CMI and there are multiple applications available to reduce Resp. Dust. Examples include; extended cutting bit lengths, Cutter Drum bit spacing and angles, reduced cutter drum revolution speeds, conveyor flyte speeds and spacings, conveyor / shearer speed compatibility, ventury spray placements and directions, return air channeling. Most of these applications have been tried, tested and documented by NIOSH.

Several years ago NIOSH published monthly newsletters explaining the use and direction for these documents and applications. Take just a minute and check a Vent plan and see if any of these are or ever have been incorporated in a plan. There are also mining equipment rebuild and manufacture contractors that do a service for reducing coal dust exposures, some guarantee they're work to reduce coal dust. I don't understand why MSHA doesn't explore some of these available avenues. I personally did explore them as an operator and attempted as an CMI attempt to bring these managements attention with NO result.

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