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Dust Retrospective Study

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Retrospective Study of Respirable Coal Mine Dust Rule

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Comment from M. Lucki,

Submitter Information

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General Comment

The coal dust rule that was set in place in 2014 by President Obama has protected vulnerable coal miners from being exposed to dangerous-cancer-causing levels of pulverized rock that accumulate in mines. The coal dust rule limited the legal amount of dust exposure, increased sample lung testing, and required real-time dust monitoring systems to be used. These implementations were necessary because high levels of coal dust in mines have caused the number of black lung cases among miners to grow exponentially since 2000. According to the New York Times, in 2000 there were about 3.7 black lung cases per 1000 miners. That number grew to 51.4 black lung cases per 1000 miners in 2013. After the coal dust rule was implemented black lung cases decrease for the first time in 15 years in 2015 with 48.5 cases per 1000 minors. The coal dust rule is working and should not be rolled back in any way. If action is going to be taken to amend this rule it should be to make testing for coal dust and black lung even more accessible to miners. Although the coal dust rule was highly contested by the coal industry, this rule has protected the lives of America's miners and should not be weakened just to save large mining corporations money.

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