

“Best Practices for Controlling Respirable Dust in Coal Mines”

November 3, 2009
National Mine Health and Safety Academy

Co-hosted by: Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

Inhalation of excessive amounts of respirable coal mine dust can cause Coal Workers’ Pneumoconiosis (CWP) and other lung diseases, commonly referred to as “black lung” disease. Likewise, overexposure to respirable silica dust can lead to silicosis. These are debilitating occupational lung diseases that can devastate a miner’s quality of life, impose heavy burdens on the victim and his or her family, and in some cases lead to premature death. While significant progress has been made since 1970 in lowering dust levels in our nation’s coal mines, recent information published by NIOSH indicates that severe cases of CWP continue to occur among coal miners. Most troubling is the fact that new cases of progressive massive fibrosis (PMF), the most disabling and potentially fatal form of CWP, have been identified in some of the younger miners in our industry. While there is no cure for black lung disease or silicosis, they are entirely preventable.

This is the first of a series of regional one-day workshops (free to attendees) that bring together a group of dust control experts from NIOSH’s Office of Mine Safety and Health and MSHA to share their knowledge and experience. This information will enable the attendees to control dust concentration levels more effectively in coal mines using practical dust control tools and techniques to prevent disabling occupational lung disease in coal miners. Mine managers and operational staff, mine workers, safety and health professionals, mine engineers, manufacturers, consultants, and anyone else with an interest in preventing occupational lung disease in coal miners are encouraged to attend.

Topics to be covered in the workshop, scheduled to start at 8:30 a.m. and last until 4:00 p.m., will focus on the best practices to control respirable coal mine dust, and include:

- *Health Consequences of Over exposure to Respirable Coal and Silica Dust*
- *Sampling to Quantify Respirable Dust Generation*
- *Continuous Miner and Roof Bolter Dust Control*
- *Proper Examination of Roof Bolter and Other Dust Control Systems*
- *How to Correctly Determine the Dust Scrubber Air Quantity*
- *Controlling Respirable Dust on Long-wall Mining Operations*
- *Silica Dust Controls for Surface Mines*

The NIOSH Office of Mine Safety and Health and MSHA are also planning to conduct similar workshops in Birmingham, AL (March 2010), Evansville, IN (April 2010), and in Grand Junction, CO (June 2010). For planning purposes, please let us know if you are interested in attending any of the other regional workshops.

If you have any questions and/or are interested in attending and would like to register for the November workshop, please contact **George Niewiadomski (MSHA) at (202) 693-9513 or by email: niewiadomski.george@dol.gov; or Jay Colinet (NIOSH) at (412) 386-6825 or by email: jcolinet@cdc.gov**



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