

Medical Monitoring for Surface and Underground Coal Miners



Health Hazard Information Card HH-53

Previously, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) required mine operators to establish an x-ray plan for underground coal mines. The x-rays were used to determine if underground coal miners had evidence of Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis (CWP or Black Lung).

Under the MSHA regulations surface coal mines are now under the same requirements. The regulation also expands the NIOSH approved plan to include additional medical testing.

Who is eligible for medical monitoring?

- ❖ Surface coal miners
- ❖ Underground coal miners

What will it cost?

- ❖ The monitoring is at no cost to the miner

What does the monitoring include?

- ❖ Chest x-ray
- ❖ Spirometry (pulmonary function/breathing test)
- ❖ Symptom assessment
- ❖ Occupational history

When is the medical monitoring offered?

- ❖ Voluntary for miners already working at a coal mine
 - ✓ provided at least every 5 years
 - ✓ available for a 6 month time period

- ❖ Mandatory for miners who begin work at a coal mine for the first time
 - ✓ initially no more than 30 days after beginning employment
 - ✓ follow-up no more than 3 years after the initial monitoring
 - ✓ another follow-up no later than 2 years from the first follow-up if there is evidence of CWP or decreased lung function

How will I know when I can go for medical monitoring?

- ❖ The NIOSH approved plan will be posted on the mine bulletin board

Where will the evaluation take place?

- ❖ At a NIOSH approved facility

If you have questions about any occupational health matter, please contact your local MSHA office or MSHA's national office at (202) 693-9500.

Our job is to protect your health

*U.S. Department of Labor
Mine Safety and Health Administration
Visit our Web site at www.msha.gov*

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