



This chart shows the significant improvements in the yearly average concentration of respirable dust in underground coal mines for those occupations exposed to the highest levels of respirable dust for each year from 2009 through 2015.

Since MSHA began its End Black Lung-ACT Now campaign in late 2009, consisting of enhanced enforcement, education and rulemaking, this average has dropped each year to new lows, reaching its lowest level in 2015. On August 1, 2014, the new respirable coal dust rule went into effect requiring more stringent sampling, as well as mandates to operators to have respirable dust controls in place to keep dust levels down. The 2015 level was reached during the operation of the new rule and is far below the current 2.0 standard and even below the 1.5 standard that will go into effect under the rule on August 1, 2016.

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