

## MSHA Update

\*A bi-partisan group of U.S. Senators introduced the COVID-19 Mine Worker Protection Act on May 13, 2020, which would require MSHA to issue an Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) within 7 days of enactment addressing COVID-19 exposure at the mines. Additionally, the bill contains provisions prohibiting mine operators from retaliating against miners for reporting infection control problems to their employer or any public authority.

Major provisions of the bill include:

- Require mine operators to provide personal protective equipment to miners;
- Require MSHA to issue a permanent comprehensive infectious disease standard within two years;
- Require MSHA to forbid employers from retaliating against miners for reporting infection control problems to their employer, or to local, State, or Federal government agencies; and,
- Require MSHA, in coordination with CDC and NIOSH, to track, analyze, and investigate mine-related COVID-19 infections data in order make recommendations and guidance to protect miners from the virus.

\*MSHA Reports Fatality at Ohio Operation Published: Thursday, 14 May 2020 14:23

Written by *Rock Products News*

The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) reported that on May 2, a miner entered a dredged sand and gravel bin through a lower access hatch to clear an obstruction. The miner was clearing the blockage with a bar when the material inside the bin fell and engulfed him. The fatality took place at Enon Sand & Gravel, Clark, Ohio. This is the seventh fatality reported in 2020, and the second classified as "Handling Material."

MSHA recommends the following best practices to avoid this type of accident:

- Lock-out, tag-out. Never enter a bin until the supply and discharge equipment is locked out.
- Train miners to recognize and safely remove all potential hazards before beginning work and when clearing blocked hoppers.
- Equip bins with mechanical devices such as vibrating shakers or air cannons to loosen blockages, or provide other effective means of handling material so miners are not exposed to entrapment hazards by falling or sliding material.
- Follow manufacturer recommendations for clearing out blockages.
- Establish and discuss policies and procedures for safely clearing bins.
- Install a heavy screen (grizzly) to control the size of the material and prevent clogging.

<https://www.msha.gov/training-education/safety-health-materials/safety-topic-mobile-equipment-surface-mines>