



DMM Safety Alert: 2014 “Near Miss” Injuries

The Virginia mineral mining industry has seen an alarming number of near miss incidents in 2014. While not all situations resulted in a full investigation by the Virginia Division of Mineral Mining (DMM), these incidents point out the need for miners to be mindful of their personal safety at all times. Here is a summary of the most potentially serious of these incidents:

- A miner was walking along a muddy pit access road as a front-end loader was exiting the pit. The miner moved to the side of the road to let the loader pass. As the loader passed the miner, a wheel of the loader ran over a rock estimated to weigh forty-five pounds. The rock was propelled from under the wheel to the side of the road striking the miner’s ankle resulting in a broken bone.
- A certified foreman was severely burned by scalding water from a truck’s radiator that had overheated.
- A cutter machine helper was struck on the back of his hard hat by a carbide wire saw button when the saw cutting cable broke. The cable bypassed the manufacturer supplied guard as it recoiled away from the machine. Two or more carbide beads/buttons detached from the cable resulting in one striking and penetrating the back of the miner’s hard hat. The miner suffered a laceration and swelling on the back of his head.
- A miner who was taking prescription medications, one to aid in smoking cessation, drank a high caffeine energy drink while on the job and subsequently passed out for a short period of time.
- A worker engaged in positioning concrete rebar during a construction project slipped and fell injuring his back.

To aid in avoiding serious personal injuries and fatalities, the Virginia DMM recommends:

- Miners must always be trained in, and follow, proper procedures.
- All persons must remain clear of moving equipment.
- Miners must be careful not to place themselves in hazardous positions.
- All persons should take medications as directed and avoid harmful combinations of medications/substances.

