



DMM Safety Alert:

Grass Mowing On Mine Sites

In May 2012, a miner was injured when the 42-inch zero-turn radius mower he was operating overturned. The miner was cutting grass on a 4:1 slope when the mower turned over. A roll bar kept the mower from turning over completely and a seat belt kept the operator from being thrown from the mower. However, the operator injured his right shoulder when he reached out to brace himself as the mower overturned. Gasoline leaked from the fuel cap vent and ignited on the hot engine. The miner ran to the plant for an extinguisher and put out the blaze in less than ten minutes. After evaluation, it was determined the miner's shoulder injury would not require hospitalization. He will be receiving physical therapy and a follow up exam.

Mine personnel often perform this type of work, which exposes them to safety and health dangers that may not be given adequate consideration. Virginia's Safety and Health Regulations for Mineral Mining require task training and operation and maintenance of equipment in accordance with manufacturer's specifications. The manufacturer's specifications for the mower involved in this accident limited it to operating on slopes of no more than ten degrees or a 6:1 slope. To avoid the occurrence of this type of accident, the Virginia Division of Mineral Mining recommends the following:

- Make sure miners are task trained in the proper operation of all equipment per the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Perform work area inspections to ensure that tasks may be carried out safely.
- Ensure that all safety equipment is in place, functional, and used according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
- If contractors are employed for this kind of work, make certain their equipment is in good working condition and the operators are properly trained.

