

DMM Safety Alert:

Drill Bit Ejected From Jaw Crusher

On November 10, 2014, a miner was seriously injured while attempting to remove a broken drill bit that had become lodged in a jaw crusher. The miner entered the crusher with a welding torch to cut the bit free. As he started to cut the bit, residual pressure from the crusher ejected the bit and it struck the miner in the chest and face rendering him unconscious for several minutes. Co-workers removed the injured man from the crusher and administered first aid while waiting for EMS to arrive. Once on site, EMS personnel performed a tracheotomy and summoned a helicopter to transport the miner to a hospital where he was admitted in critical condition and treated for two collapsed lungs, a fractured C7 vertebra, a broken jaw and broken teeth. He remains in the hospital in serious condition at this time. To assist in avoiding this type of injury in the future, The Virginia Division of Mineral Mining recommends the following:

- Work on machinery must not be performed until the power is off and the machinery is blocked against motion.
- A safety harness attached to an attended life line must be worn by persons entering confined spaces.
- Manufacturer's recommendations must be followed when performing work on machinery.
- Safe work procedures should be established and followed to prevent miner's exposure to hazards.



Broken drill bit that struck the miner



Jaw crusher opening entered by miner