

DMM Safety Alert: First Aid/CPR Training

Recently, a mobile equipment operator who was tramping an excavator across a mine pit, started to feel very ill so he called his supervisor. A co-worker sent to check on the sick worker decided to transport him to the employee building. After getting into the co-worker's truck, the sick worker lost consciousness. The co-worker quickly assessed the situation and determined that the sick worker had gone into cardiac arrest. The co-worker immediately called for assistance, informing them to call 911, and to bring the plant's AED unit. The co-worker began performing CPR on the unconscious worker. Three other co-workers eventually assisted in performing CPR for approximately 15 to 20 minutes, while waiting for EMS personnel to arrive. Just before EMS arrived, the sick worker regained consciousness. He was transported to a local hospital where he received advanced cardiac care. Unfortunately, the sick worker passed away three days later after suffering a second heart attack while in the hospital waiting for his condition to improve so that open heart surgery could be performed. While this did not ultimately have a happy ending, it is important to recognize that the quick response by CPR-trained personnel gave this person a second chance at survival.

The Virginia Division of Mineral Mining (DMM) is aware of at least two other cases in recent years in Virginia where mine personnel with first aid/CPR training and certification recognized the signs and symptoms of a heart attack, immediately called 9-1-1 and ultimately saved the heart attack victim's life. In one case, the victim, who had recently been trained in first aid/CPR, recognized his symptoms as a heart attack and asked that EMS personnel be called. In the other case, a miner stated that he wanted to go home because he wasn't feeling well. First aid/CPR trained co-workers recognized the miner's symptoms as those associated with a heart attack and called 9-1-1. In both cases, the victims were transported to local hospitals, had open heart surgery performed the same day they were admitted, and both survived. Both miners were told that they likely survived because they had received advanced care so promptly.

DMM offers National Safety Council first aid/CPR training and certification free of charge to mine operators and contractors. DMM encourages companies to take advantage of this invaluable training. Regardless of the source, DMM strongly recommends that mine personnel get first aid and CPR training from a nationally recognized program. **First aid and CPR training can and does save lives!!**

