



## June 2011 Newsletter



### Accidents of the Month

On Saturday, May 14, 2011, a 37-year old mechanic with 14 years of mining experience and 1½ years of experience as a mechanic, was killed while removing a counter weight fuel tank assembly



from a front-end loader. He was positioned beneath the front-end loader when he removed 14 of the 16 mounting bolts that secure the counter

weight. When the victim attempted to remove the next to last bolt, the remaining two bolts failed allowing the 11,685 pound counterweight to fall on him. The counter weight had not been blocked to prevent it from falling.

If a Job Safety Analysis and discussion preceding this task had been performed, perhaps the following information regarding blocking would have been discussed.

### **Blocking Raised Equipment Safely**

Good practices to observe while working on raised equipment:



- Prepare the supporting ground or floor surface with bearing plates or floor surface with bearing plates or blocks to ensure stability of the

load.

- Clear sufficient working space around the equipment.
- Use only wood blocks that are solid; discard blocks with twists or decay.
- Inspect blocks and jack stands during loading and correct any signs of shifting or tilting.
- Metal to metal contact may cause equipment to shift or slide, use proper blocking materials and keep the load level.
- Ensure that all chains and slings are properly rated for the load, are in good condition, and have safety catches as needed.

On Saturday, June 4th, a worker at the Fort Knox gold mine near Fairbanks became the 6th MNM fatality for 2011, after falling to his death near the end of his shift.

Michael J. Murray, 39, of Fairbanks was alone on the second floor of a crusher room cleaning up when he tripped and fell through an opening two stories to the floor below.

Murray was supposed to be harnessed to a safety line but wasn't wearing the harness for reasons unknown, said Alaska State troopers spokeswoman Beth Ipsen. He usually wore one, troopers were told.

Murray had worked for the mine for more than a year, the company said. Before Saturday's death, Fort Knox had gone 4½ years without a work-related accident or injury that prevented the person from working the next scheduled shift.

On June 9th, a surface contract construction



worker was injured when he fell from a catwalk platform and struck an I-beam on the ground below, a distance of about *eight feet*. He was conscious initially and was being transported by ambulance to a local hospital when he stopped breathing. Ambulance attendants administered CPR and continued resuscitation efforts until arrival at the hospital, where hospital personnel continued CPR. The hospital personnel were unable to revive the victim and he was pronounced dead.



This accident occurred on the surface of the West Elk Mine in Colorado. Coal District 9 personnel have started an investigation.

Again if a JSA had been performed and the job hazards discussed, perhaps the following would have been considered:

### **Fall Protection**

- Fall protection is required whenever there is a danger of falling.
- Assess all work from elevations for fall hazards --plants, buildings, trucks, highwalls and equipment.
- Cover or guard all floor and wall openings.
- Train all workers to recognize fall hazards.
- Beware the "temporary" job -- address fall protection hazards even for tasks of short duration.
- Ensure that drillers and *contractors* have a specific fall protection program for your mine site.

- Examine the work site for fall hazards before jobs begin.

### **2011 New Mexico Mine Health and Safety Conference**

The 2011 NMMHSC was a great success. We had 170 attendees that attended our most exciting program yet for our 4th annual conference. Our **Fo-**  
**cus 24-7** theme featured topics on health and off the job safety. Here are some highlight photos from the conference. We are already planning for April 30, May 1 & 2, 2012. Our next planning meeting will be July 28th in Socorro. Our theme is *"Your Path To Success"*.



*New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Secretary Duvall addressed emergency management and mining*

*Jared Fogel with Cindi Castillo and Katie Martin at registration*



*Assistant Secretary of Labor for Mine Health and Safety addressed the conference*

*Ben Hart Informed and entertained in his breakout session on training*



*14 exhibitors displayed products and new technology to conference attendees*

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## ***New Mexico Mining Safety Board***

The New Mexico Mining Safety Board met in Socorro on May 4th. The meeting initiated discussions on modifying regulations dealing with emergency notification requirements. These discussions will continue at the next meeting scheduled for 10 AM, September 15th in Albuquerque at the Workman's Comp Administration.

## ***Fireworks Safety***

With July 4th around the corner, everyone should be reminded about our dry conditions and fireworks safety. The safest solution is to visit your local public display and leave it up to professionals. With New Mexico conditions everywhere dryer than it has been in years and all the fires around us, fireworks at home are literally playing with fire. Anyone using them at home should only do so on bare areas and avoid aeriels. Have a hose, bucket of water and/or fire extinguisher available. A good safety video on fireworks was done by the Midland, TX FD and can be found at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h6K0t6q5wX8>

## ***Monsoon Season***

According to the National Weather Service, the North American Monsoon System affects Western Mexico, New Mexico and Arizona. Southwestern New Mexico receives 70% of yearly moisture during this time. The rest of the state receives 50% of the year's rainfall in the monsoons,

Even as New Mexico battles numerous wildfires, according to the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the State's damages to public infrastructure from flooding since 2001, totals over \$74 million dollars. Because New Mexico is a desert area, many residents do not have flood insurance. Monsoon season includes damaging flash floods, thunderstorms and lightning strikes. For safety tips on these hazard-

ous weather occurrences the New Mexico Family Preparedness Guide is available online at [www.nmdhsem.org](http://www.nmdhsem.org). Look for the Preparedness icon, then Preparedness Guide.

If you are in a vehicle and approach rushing water, the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management advises "Turn Around, Don't Drown".

## ***Training***

The current Training Schedule through August will be found on our web site shortly:

<http://www.bmi.state.nm.us/navTrng.htm>

We know we have had web issues the past couple months and hope to have that resolved soon. Please take time to look it over. To schedule a class, please call Chris at (505) 553-1535.

## **Mine Health and Safety is**



**In New Mexico!**