

# Surgepile Save @ Rocklick Prep Plant, ID No. 46-06448, District 4;

## Justification for Alert

### Background

On December 5, 2012, 61 year old dozer operator was entrapped when the dozer fell into a void in a clean coal stockpile. The dozer trammed across the unidentified void and fell through covering the dozer and trapping the operator under approximately 20 feet of coal. He was trapped for approximately 3 hours, 45 minutes.

Since 2001, advances have been made in the area of preventing surgepile related fatalities:

- Cab glass strengthened
- Communications for operators
- Breathable air through SCSR's and available emergency lighting
- Automatic shut off switches for feeders



Dozer buried under 20' of coal



Buried miner was trapped for nearly 4 hours and used two scsr's





Inspectors on site stated that heat in the cab was unbearable. Heat sources were from the engine, SCSR's, and body heat.

This accident highlights the need for increased awareness among dozer operators on surgepiles on the issue of heat stress. Listed below are potential short term and long term solutions.

Short term solutions could be provided through an alert posted on the MSHA website

- cool packs provided in the cab
- additional available fluids
- more SCSR's (had the dozer been buried deeper more rescue time would be needed)
- different type of SCSR which allows miners to drink while using them
- having a barrier available to shield oneself against the heat generated from the SCSR

Long term solutions could be

- working through the MSHA/AEM alliance to encourage manufacturers to study and develop engineering solutions to prevent heat stress including cooling vests provided in the cab of surgepile dozers.