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SAFETY ALERT BULLETIN

(No. 6 – 2023)

Kentucky DMS Safety Alert No. 6 – Fall of Highwall

On December 1st, 2023, at approximately 5:00 AM a non-injury highwall failure occurred at an underground mine in the Harlan Branch.

A large section of highwall above the No. 3 portal, which was the belt line entry, dislodged striking and collapsing the canopy and conveyor belt. Although the section of highwall that fell varied significantly in height, width, and length, the portion of highwall was estimated between 15-20 feet in thickness, 30 feet in height, and 20-30 feet in width.

Incident Scene



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conduct a frequent, proper and adequate visual examination of highwalls, looking for cracks and other indicators of hazardous conditions.
2. All employees shall be trained in the identification of highwall stability standards.
3. Understand and follow safety precautions in the mine ground control and roof control plan(s).
4. During winter months, monitor highwalls for freezing and thawing conditions in order to identify areas of instability.