

NIOSH Releases New Safety Video: Make It Safer With Roof Screen

Coal miners, especially roof bolter and continuous miner operators, work in a hazardous underground environment where they are often exposed to poor roof conditions. Nearly 500 rock fall injuries are reported each year, and 99% of them are caused by rocks falling from between the roof bolts. These loose rocks that injure miners are usually just a few inches thick, but on average weigh 280 pounds.

NIOSH has found that most rock fall injuries can be prevented by installing roof screen during the bolting cycle. Roof screen is a sheet made of steel wires in a grid pattern. When screen is bolted up against the mine roof, it provides far more coverage than any common surface control used in the mines today. Because more mine roof is covered, there is less chance that a rock will fall and injure a miner.

The facts about roof screen are shown in the new NIOSH video entitled "Make It Safer With Roof Screen." Using extensive underground footage, the 7-minute video shows how well screen keeps loose rock from falling in difficult roof conditions. Techniques for installing screen from both outside-controlled and walk-thru roof bolting machines are shown. The video also provides safe handling tips, best practices, and information about machine technology that can greatly improve material handling. Throughout the video, a coal mine safety manager and a shift foreman talk about the tremendous difference that roof screen has made at their mines.

An instructional booklet supplements the video with additional information. It presents compelling data from mines that have practically eliminated rock fall injuries with a roof screening program. Other sections



of the booklet discuss in greater detail roof screen installation, tips for manual screen handling, a material handling system for roof screen, and use of the personal bolter screen, which can be easily handled by one person. Screen specification and custom ordering are described, including the sizes of screen, grid sizes, reinforcing (indicator) wires, edge cut options, and screen strength. A list of additional sources of information is also provided.

Nearly every mine eventually encounters poor roof. Screen is one of the most powerful control techniques available. This new video will help make mine managers aware of screen, and it can help them in developing a roof screen installation program. It also serves as an information source and teaching tool for safety managers and trainers. The video can easily be integrated into new miner training programs or annual refresher training.



The goal of all coal mine safety professionals is to make mines a safer place to work. Reducing the number of rock fall injuries by installing roof screen will help. This roof screen video module provides information and ideas for developing an effective roof screen program, thus achieving the goal of a safer workplace.

To order a free copy of the “Make It Safer With Roof Screen” video and booklet, contact Susan B. Robertson at 412-386-6720, e-mail: **SBRobertson@cdc.gov**, or Christopher Mark, Ph.D., at 412-386-6522, e-mail: **CMark@cdc.gov**. Or you may complete the order form below, detach, and mail to Susan B. Robertson, NIOSH Pittsburgh Research Laboratory, Cochrans Mill Rd., P.O. Box 18070, Pittsburgh, PA 15236-0070, or fax to 412-386-6891.

To receive more information about occupational safety and health problems, call **1-800-35-NIOSH (1-800-356-4674)**, or visit the NIOSH Web site at www.cdc.gov/niosh

Mention of any company name or product does not constitute endorsement by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

Please send me a free copy of the “Make It Safer With Roof Screen” video and booklet.

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