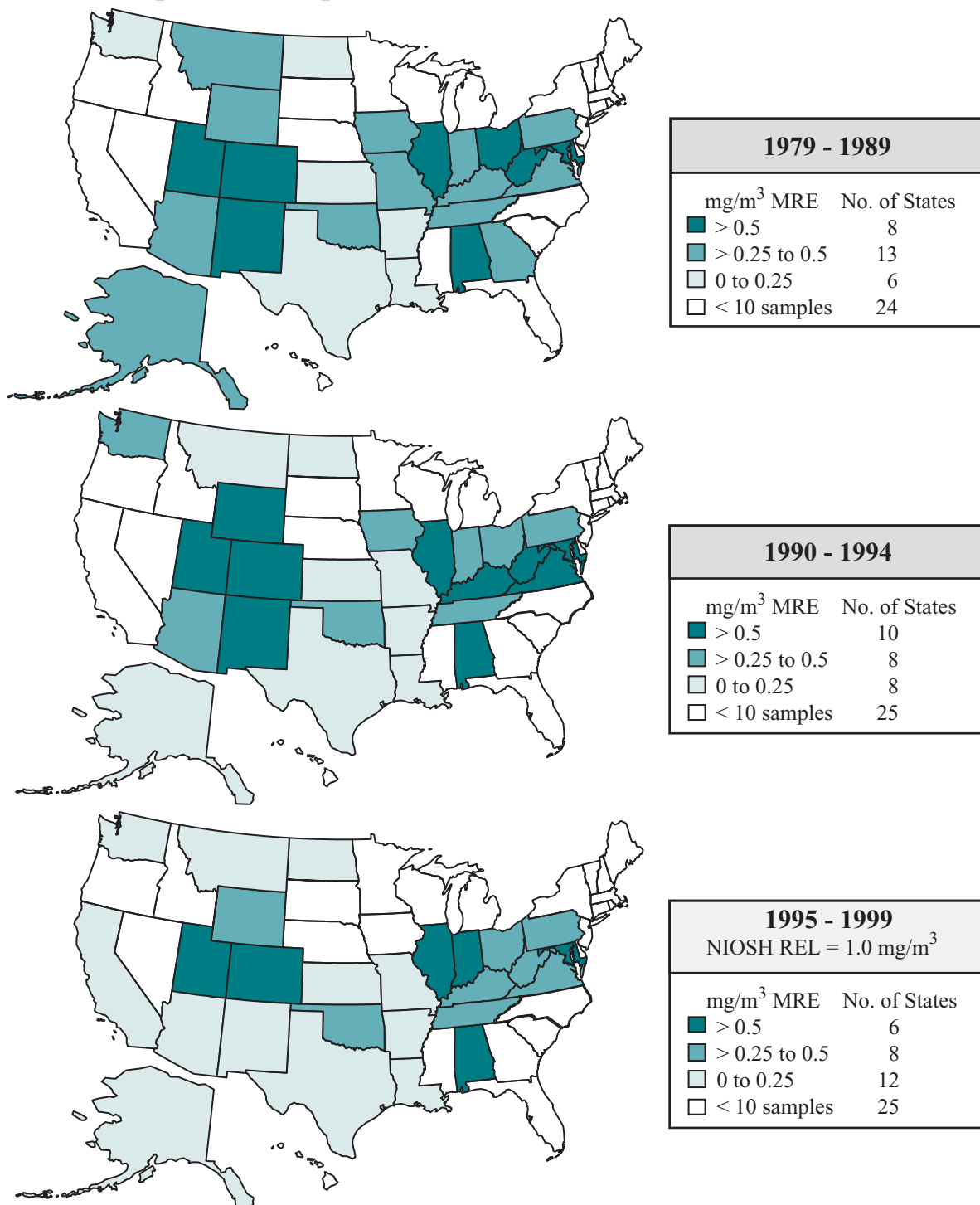


**Figure 2-8. Respirable coal mine dust: Geometric mean exposures by state, MSHA inspector and mine operator samples, 1979-1999**



PEL - permissible exposure limit REL - recommended exposure limit mg/m<sup>3</sup> - milligrams per cubic meter MRE - Mining Research Establishment  
 NOTE: In coal mining, for respirable dust containing less than 5% quartz, the MSHA PEL is 2 mg/m<sup>3</sup> MRE; for respirable dust containing greater than 5% quartz, the MSHA PEL is [(10 mg/m<sup>3</sup> MRE) / (% quartz)]. The NIOSH REL of 1 mg/m<sup>3</sup> MRE for respirable coal mine dust was adopted in September of 1995. Geometric means are reported in MRE equivalent. See appendices for source description, methods, and agents.  
 SOURCE: Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) coal mine inspector and mine operator dust data.