



## MSHA “Dust Sweep”-- Respirable Dust Emphasis

The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) will conduct a week-long dust control emphasis program beginning on December 7, 2009. This program, involving the agency’s divisions of Coal Mine Safety and Health (CMS&H), Technical Support and Educational Policy and Development, is a coordinated enforcement and outreach plan to highlight the prevalence of coal workers’ pneumoconiosis (CWP), silicosis and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) that continues to be a risk to coal miners. The risk for disease can be minimized by taking preventative measures.

Dust control technology and measures are available for underground coal mines. Mine operators must ensure the adequacy and effectiveness of dust controls and implement best practices to minimize unhealthy respirable coal mine dust concentrations in their coal mines.

During this week, Coal Mine Safety and Health will dedicate every coal mine inspector to apply the lessons learned from MSHA’s dust initiative including:

- Examining the adequacy and effectiveness of dust controls, including scrubbers, sprays, ventilation and air quantities
- Developing best practices to minimize the generation of unhealthy respirable coal mine dust concentrations in underground coal mines
- Taking a close look at the operator sampling program and how mines implement it
- Providing health outreach and education on the prevention of black lung and associated lung diseases and the control of respirable coal mine dust

Technical Support will:

- Raise awareness on the capabilities of continuous personal dust monitors (CPDMs) at selected underground coal mines around the country
- Deploy three teams of Technical Support personnel who will accompany CMS&H inspectors with the new Model 3600 Personal Dust Monitor to demonstrate them to coal miners at selected mines

Educational Policy and Development will:

- Train and certify industry personnel to conduct dust sampling
- Monitor industry instructors and evaluate the effectiveness of industry training programs in making miners aware of the risks of black lung and silicosis and effective prevention methods
- Conduct awareness programs on the use and care of personal protective equipment
- Develop and distribute training materials on black lung and silicosis prevention