



JUL 28 2011

To the Mining Community:

Between January 1 and June 30, 2011, 14 miners lost their lives in mining accidents in the United States. Six miners were killed in accidents at metal and nonmetal mines; eight miners lost their lives in coal mine accidents.

Even though the number of mining deaths for the first half of this year are at an all-time low, one mining death is still one too many. To that end, MSHA has placed detailed information on its website at <http://www.msha.gov/fatals/summaries/summaries.asp> analyzing these mining fatalities for the first half of 2011 and best practices to prevent them.

Fatalities are preventable. Mining workplaces can and must be made safe for miners, and operators must ensure that safety procedures are always followed. Many mines operate every shift of every day, year in and year out, without a fatality or a lost-time injury. It can be done. It requires focus, effort and dedication.

Fatalities can be prevented by using effective **safety and health management programs** in your workplaces. **Workplace examinations** for hazards – pre-shift and on-shift every shift – can identify and eliminate hazards that kill and injure miners. And providing effective and appropriate **training** will ensure that miners recognize and understand hazards and how to control or eliminate them. Mine operators and Part 46 and Part 48 trainers need to train miners and mine supervisors on the conditions that lead to deaths and injuries and measures to prevent and avoid them.

MSHA has taken a number of actions to identify mines with health and safety problems and initiated several outreach and enforcement initiatives, including “Rules to Live By,” a fatality prevention program spotlighting the safety and health standards most frequently cited during fatal accident investigations. We believe those actions, along with initiatives by the mining industry, have resulted in the improved fatality numbers so far this year.

No miner should have to die on the job just to earn a paycheck. We must all work together to ensure that does not happen. We are united in our determination that all miners go home safe and healthy at the end of each shift.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph A. Main".

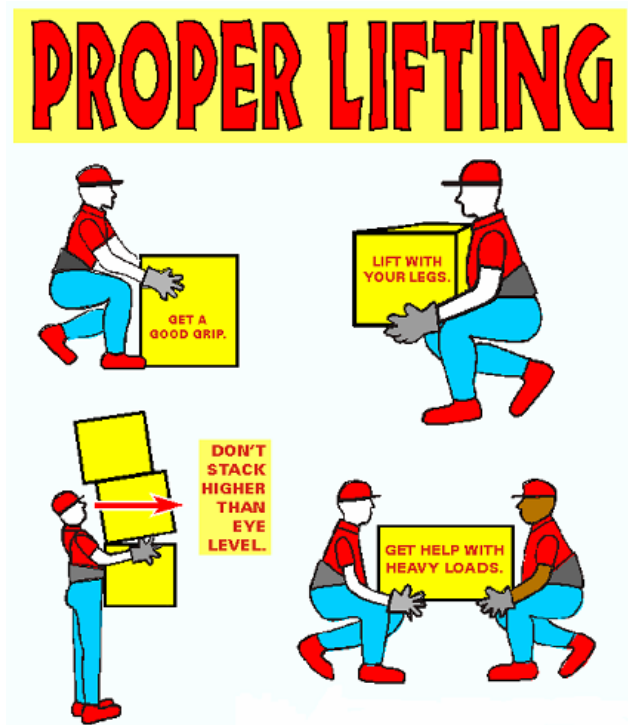
Joseph A. Main  
Assistant Secretary of Labor for  
Mine Safety and Health

## SAVE YOUR BACK

After the common cold, lower-back problems are the most common cause of lost work time and compensation in adults under the age of 45. Such pain results in \$126 billion in compensation and medical cost each year.

### Tips to prevent back injury and pain:

- Practice good posture, and try to maintain good physical condition.
- Whenever possible, use mechanical equipment to avoid manual lifting.
- Before manually lifting an object, size up the job.
- If the job is too big to handle safely on your own, find someone to help you.
- When lifting, stand close to the object, bend at the knees, and keep your back straight.
- Tighten your abdominal muscles, and lift with the muscles in your arms and legs, not your back.
- Hold the object close to your body, and never twist your back while handling a load.
- If you must turn, do so by moving your feet.
- When setting an object down, apply all of the same techniques.



**NORTHWEST MINING ASSOCIATION SAYS:**

***IF EVER THERE IS UNCERTAINTY, ALWAYS SIDE WITH SAFETY***