



What Mine Operators Can Expect after the Pandemic: MSHA Will Soon Push Its Regulatory Agenda

Insights

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As the country begins to reopen, many mine operators are contemplating next steps for their own operations. One certainty is that the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) will continue to enforce the provisions of the Mine Act and relevant regulatory requirements. On its most recent stakeholder call, MSHA very briefly mentioned the COVID-19 pandemic, acknowledged there is no MSHA specific guidance forthcoming from the agency, and moved right into a discussion of the next target for rulemaking: [Safety Improvement Technologies for Mobile Equipment at Surface Mines, and for Belt Conveyors at Surface and Underground Mines.](#)

MSHA published a Request for Information (RFI) on June 26, 2018, seeking information on technological improvements for powered haulage equipment. The agency justified the potential for a rule by citing an increase in fatalities from accidents involving equipment at surface mines, and belt conveyors at surface and underground mines since 2007. The comment period for the RFI closed December 24, 2018. Now, we wait for MSHA to issue a proposed rule regarding a potential safety program for mobile equipment at surface mines and surface areas of underground mines.

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