



Mine Safety: An Industry Priority

There is a common misperception that coal mining is the most dangerous of occupations. Many people mistakenly believe that coal miners still are forced to work in conditions similar to those seen in historical pictures or old movies, with blackened faces and pickaxes slung over shoulders and without any form of support or representation in the industry or government. In reality, however, coal mining has undergone substantial changes since its beginnings in North America.

Mining is regulated under a comprehensive federal safety law (Federal Mine Safety and Health Act) that is administered by the Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA).

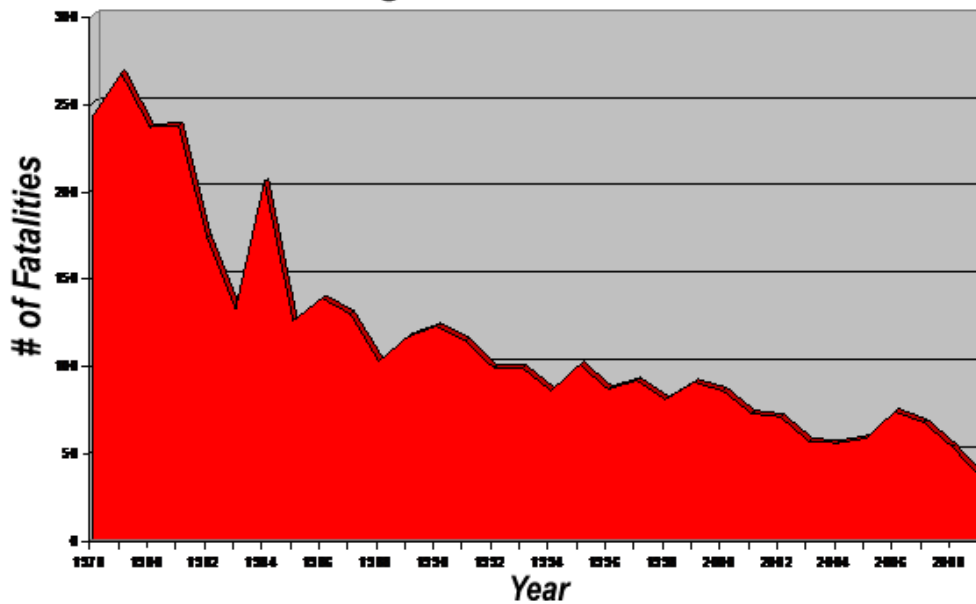
By any measure, the U.S. mining industry in total has made significant advances in improving the health and safety of its skilled and highly-trained workforce. This improvement, documented statistically from several independent sources, has been sustained, significant and long-term, and is the result of seven key trends:

- A commitment by management, workers & regulators to a goal of zero fatalities & injuries;
- better equipment design;
- technological advances;
- conscientious safety awareness;
- improved engineering methods;
- advanced and continuous training;
- strong oversight and assistance from the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration.

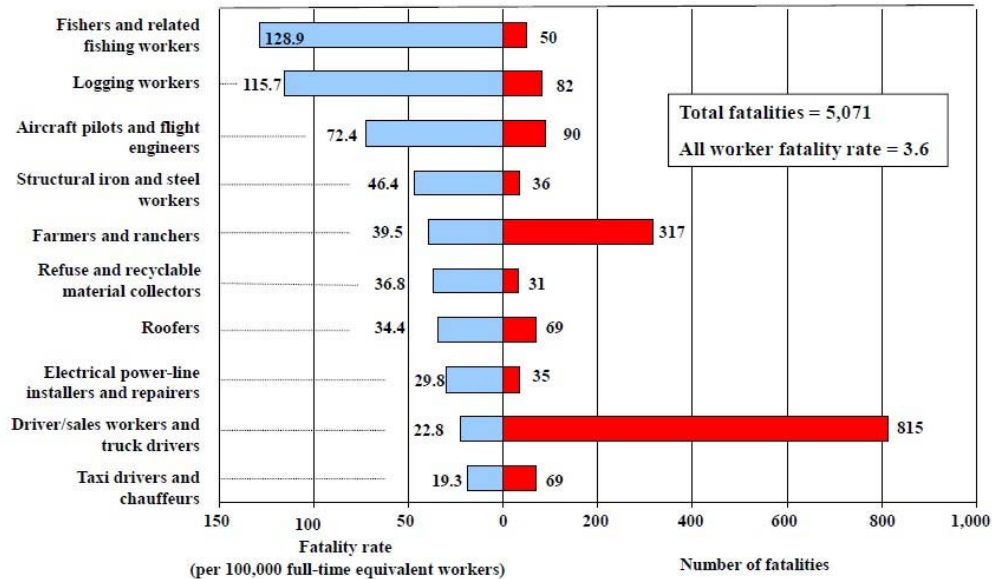
As with any industry, there are some risks associated with coal mining. However, a committed and comprehensive effort on the part of industry, government and employees over the past 40 years has seen employee injuries and **fatalities reduced by 93%**. This improvement in employee safety is made all the more impressive in light of the fact that, during the same time period, production of coal in the U.S. has increased by 75%.

In **2009** there was **a historical low in fatalities; only 18 miner fatalities occurred per 100,000 workers**. When compared with the previous 6 years, the 2009 fatality rate for coal mining of .0149 injuries per 200,000 hours worked is less than half of the 2003 rate of .0312. As the MSHA graph shows (second graph, next page), **mining was not even in the top 10 most dangerous occupations**.

U.S. Mining Fatalities CY 1978-2009



Selected occupations with high fatality rates, 2008*



Fatal work injury rates were highest for fishers, logging workers, and aircraft pilots and flight engineers in 2008.

*Data for 2008 are preliminary.

NOTE: In 2008, CFOI implemented a new methodology, using hours worked for fatality rate calculations rather than employment. For additional information on the fatality rate methodology changes please see <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshnotice10.htm>.

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, 2009.

- Injuries have fallen by two-thirds in the last 16 years.
- Over half of U.S. coal mines operate each year without a single lost work time injury.
- Since 1970, coal production has increased 89 percent while fatal injuries have decreased by 81 percent.