Guarding of Machines

October 11, 2016 - Improperly designed machine guards can put miners at risk. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) conducted an analysis of injuries associated with machine maintenance and repair and identified a significant prevalence of injuries caused by metal covers and guards.

Over a ten-year period, the industry reported over 2,000 incidents caused by metal covers and guards to MSHA accounting for nearly 52,000 days lost from maintenance and repair work at surface mining facilities. These incidents included injuries to the hand caused by being caught between or struck by guards as well as over-exertion injuries sustained to the shoulders and back.

While these guards and covers are necessary to protect workers from mine hazards, they may also pose safety risks when designers do not consider their maintainability. To reduce the prevalence and severity of overexertion and traumatic injuries associated with manually handling machine guards, the mining industry should reduce the size and weight of machine guards so that they may be easily handled by one person.

For further information, please contact Jonisha P. Pollard, **JPollard@cdc.gov**.

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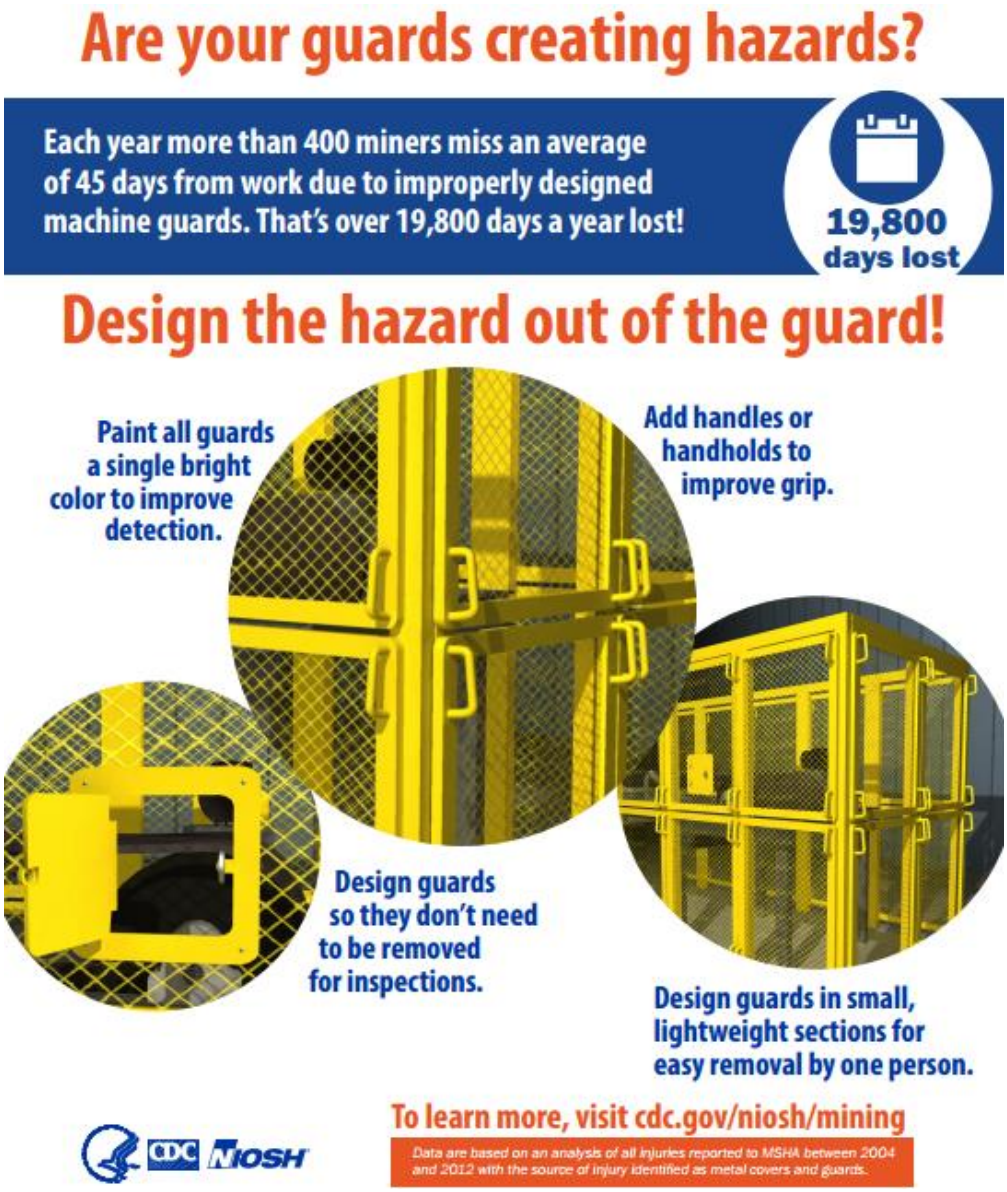

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