



**US Department of Labor
Mine Safety and Health Administration**

**Coal Mine Injuries Drop
As MSHA Continues Site Enforcement Efforts, Compliance Assistance**

The Mine Safety and Health Administration has jurisdiction over 1,967 coal mines nationwide. The Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 requires MSHA to inspect each underground mine at least four times and each surface mine at least twice annually. From CY 2000 to CY 2003, Coal Mine Safety & Health (CMS&H) enforcement program site events per mine increased by 1 percent. At the same time compliance assistance has become an integral part of every mine visit. From reviewing a mine’s compliance and safety performance prior to an inspection to conducting outreach programs to discuss trends and provide training, CMS&H is using all available resources to achieve a vision shared throughout the mining community: to send every miner home at the end of each work day in a safe and healthy condition.

Coal	CY 2000	CY 2001	CY 2002	CY 2003	Percent change, CY 2000-2003
Enforcement program site events per mine	14.1	14.5	14.5	14.2*	+1%
Mining fatalities	38	42	27	30	-21%
Total mining injuries	6,429	6,299	6,039	5,136*	-20%
Number of miners	108,098	114,458	110,966	104,850*	-3%

*4th Quarter, preliminary

The coal mining industry has reduced fatalities and injuries markedly. Coal fatalities have declined 21 percent between CY 2000 and CY 2003. Coal mining injuries declined by 20 percent in the same period. More coal miners went home to their families in a safe and healthy condition at the end of each working day.

The Triangle of Success

Influencing this success is MSHA’s use of all the tools provided in the 1977 Act to help create a culture of prevention throughout the mining industry. These tools -- enforcement, education and training, and technical assistance -- are known as the MSHA “Triangle of Success.” New avenues for training, the exploration of innovative technologies, and unprecedented Alliance Agreements are creating a network of effective partnerships. Among its new initiatives in CY 2001-2003, MSHA’s new Small Mines Office has so far visited the operators of more than 2,300 mines employing five or fewer miners to offer compliance assistance.

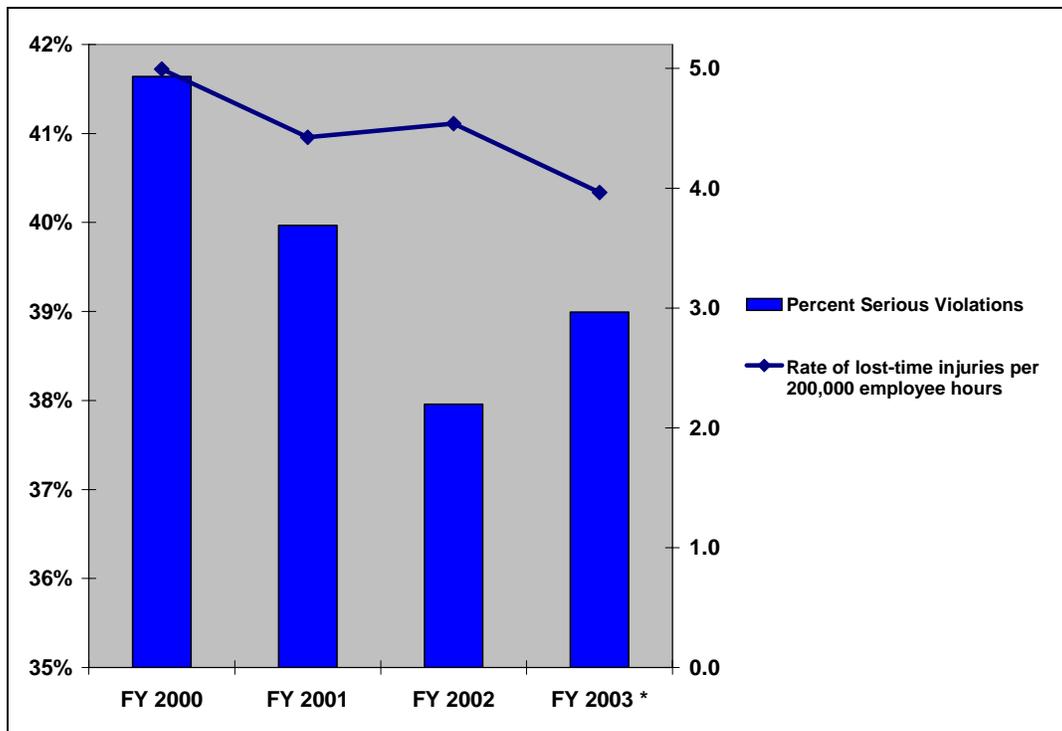


Rates of coal mining injuries substantiate safety progress

Rates of injury are recognized as the most reliable index of safety progress. The coal mining industry achieved substantial reductions in injury rates across the board from CY 2000 to CY 2003.

Coal	CY 2000	CY 2001	CY 2002	CY 2003	Percent change, CY 2000-2003
Incident rates per 200,000 employee-hours					
Lost-time injuries	4.99	4.43	4.54	3.96*	-21%
All injuries	6.64	6.03	6.03	5.35*	-19%

It is important to note that serious violation rates have dropped in parallel with the serious (lost time) injury rates – a sign of true success in reducing hazards that cause both violations and accidents that result in injury.



*4th Quarter, preliminary