

METAL/NONMETAL Close Call Accident Alert

Surface – Sand – On May 21, 2018, a dozer operator was working on a waste pile when the soil beneath the dozer sloughed into the adjacent pond, causing the dozer to become submerged in the pond. The dozer came to rest approximately 12 feet beneath the water's surface. Fellow miners were able to dig a trench and drain the pond, which allowed rescue crews to access the cab. The miner climbed free from the cab after spending over two hours below the surface.



Best Practices

- A competent person should look closely at any work area around a drop off for signs of instability, including cracks, sloughs, or changes in seepage/adjacent water levels when conducting a workplace exam.
- Use equipment (excavator) that can perform the work from a safe distance away from the edge of a pond where the stability of the ground may be unknown.
- Require that flotation devices be worn by persons performing work where there is a danger of falling in the water.
- When dozing toward a highwall edge, constantly examine the ground surface for development of cracks or fissures indicating separation, push perpendicular to the highwall face, and always keep a full blade in front of you.
- When dozing soft or unconsolidated material, be aware of changes in the footing under you and immediately back out of material that feels like it is softening.
- When work near water is necessary, the pool elevation should be maintained as low as practicable, night work should not be performed without adequate lighting, and equipment should work in pairs or others should maintain visual/verbal contact with solo equipment.



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