

Accident victim interview



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Accident Victim Interview 6th, November, Many occupational accidents happen because of workers taking shortcuts, following incomplete instructions, poor housekeeping, and being overconfident at work. Arguably, the level of accidents has fallen in the recent years with different industries adopting a safer working environment. His paper describes an interview with an accident victim stipulating the events of the accident and the aftermath of the accident.

The victim worked as a miner in a coalmine when the accident occurred on 2 January 2006 in USA. This miner woke up early as usual to perform his duties in the mine unknowing what awaited him. Earlier before the accident in 2005, Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) had visited the site and reported that the working environment did not meet the correct standards. Some of the violations included problems with escape ways, not keeping proper roof standards, and poor mine ventilation. Apparently, the mine has a history of roof falls. On this fateful day, the mine fire boss had inspected the mine and cleared it for use minutes before the first miners entered. Although the miners did not notice a thunderstorm just before they entered, US National Lightning Detection reports there was one. The lightning strike near the mine caused an ignition of methane from a recently sealed area of the mine. The result of this was a big explosion that blew out the seals and transferred smoke, dust, debris, and lethal carbon monoxide to the working section of the mine. Thirteen persons were trapped in the mine resulting to the death of twelve of them who succumbed to carbon monoxide asphyxiation.

The victim inhaled carbon monoxide for a long duration, which resulted to unconsciousness. In addition, the poor ventilation in the mines resulted to

destruction of some vital organs in the body. The victim stayed in the life support machine for one month and a half because his respiratory system had been destroyed. At the time he regained consciousness after two weeks, the victim could not hear, had a blurred vision, and severe headache. One year down the line, the victim could not do much for himself although he could now see clearly and hear a bit. He went back to work after four years in a different mine.

MSHA officials arrived on the scene at 10. 30 am but could not do much since the levels of carbon dioxide in the air prevented them from going deep in the mines. In addition, any lighting the power system could have caused another explosion. Later, MSHA found out some violations on the mine that increased the risk of the miners. The violations included a leaking gas pocket that was fixed with the ordinary glue, and some emergency oxygen packs were not working causing the trapped victims to share. Although the mine was closed, regulations passed have caused other mines to create better working environments. The victim tells me that in the current mine he is working on follows all the safety procedures, ensures no gas leaks, and has a safe get away in case of an accident. In addition, the mine maintains a safe roof that can handle any explosion without falling off. For his safety, the miner counter checks the working conditions to make sure that his life is safe.