

Innovative Safety & Health Leadership Award Recipient

New Frontier Materials – Bluff City

Cone and Tag Hazard Awareness Method

Terry Croxford, Operations Manager, at New Frontier Materials' underground stone mine in Alton, Illinois has been credited by his company and fellow employees for developing the cone and tag hazard awareness method that they credit for maintaining MSHA compliance and keeping miners safe. In February, members of the IAAP's Safety Committee reviewed the idea and determined it deserves the 2023 IAAP Innovative Safety & Health Leadership award. The company will be recognized at the IAAP's Annual Convention and Aggregate Miner Safety Conference in December.

A preview of this innovation will demonstrate how your company can easily adopt this method at your mining and work sites.



According to Croxford, “This simple idea using safety cones and tags allows for complete hazard follow-through from start to finish and when used properly, does not let a hazard be forgotten or not properly corrected in a timely manner. This, keeps all employees, equipment, contractors, and anyone else at the mine safe.”

After MSHA's new rule on Examinations of Working Places in Metal and Nonmetal Mines in 2019, inspectors have been focused on timely correction of identified hazards and mine operators are held accountable for ensuring these hazards are not forgotten. Prior to implementing this idea, in the latter part of 2020, two MSHA inspections that year had resulted in numerous citations. Croxford and his crew at the Bluff City mine needed a fresh approach. New cones and special tags were purchased to implement their plan.

A tag is used to describe the employee, location, date and nature of the hazard. Then the tag is attached to a cone to alert everyone traveling in the area. The hazard is also noted on the employee's workplace exam. After the hazard is corrected, the tag is signed, dated and attached to the original workplace exam where the corrective action is noted for the record.

Over the next two years (2021 and 2022) following implementation in 2020, the number of citations dropped dramatically as well as lost-time and reportable accidents. All New Frontier Materials mines are now adopting the *Cone and Tag Hazard Awareness Method*.

The IAAP's Safety Committee developed this award to recognize a company, workplace team, or individual demonstrating superior or exemplary contributions in safety & health leadership that engage employees with the understanding of what is needed to build and sustain an “injury free workplace” through their innovative and collective efforts.