

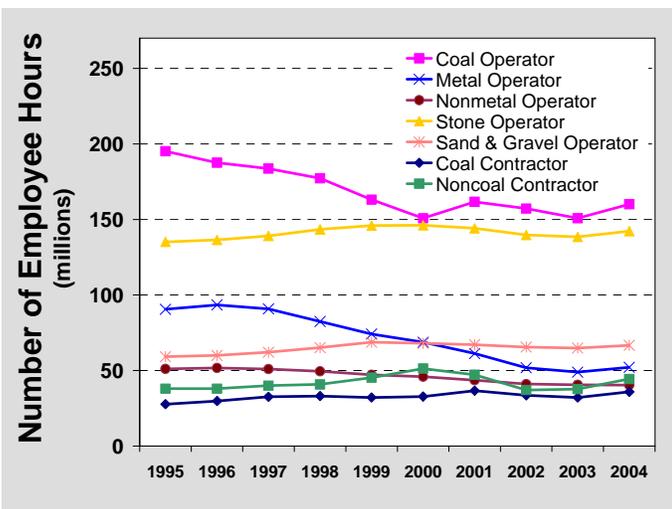
# COAL CONTRACTOR MINING FACTS – 2004

The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) defines an independent contractor as “any person, partnership, corporation, subsidiary of a corporation, firm, association or other organization that contracts to perform services or construction at a mine.” Contractors that perform specific types of work are required to report the number of employees who work at coal mines and noncoal mines.

In 2004, a total of 2,550 **contracting companies** reported employment at coal mines to MSHA, or 38.1% of all independent contractor companies.

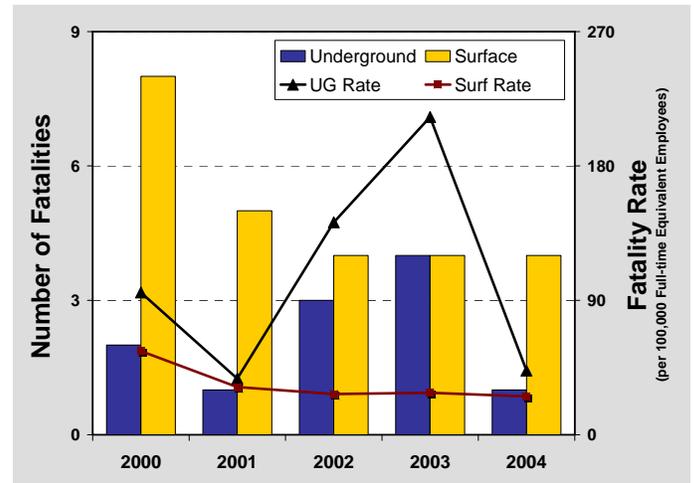
A total of 30,228 **employees**,<sup>1</sup> corresponding to 17,964 full-time equivalent (FTE)<sup>2</sup> employees, were reported by coal contractors to MSHA.

- Within the mining sectors,<sup>3</sup> coal contractor employees comprised 6.6% of all employee hours reported to MSHA.
- Coal contractor employee hours were reported for both underground (13.0%) and surface (87.0%) work locations.<sup>4</sup>



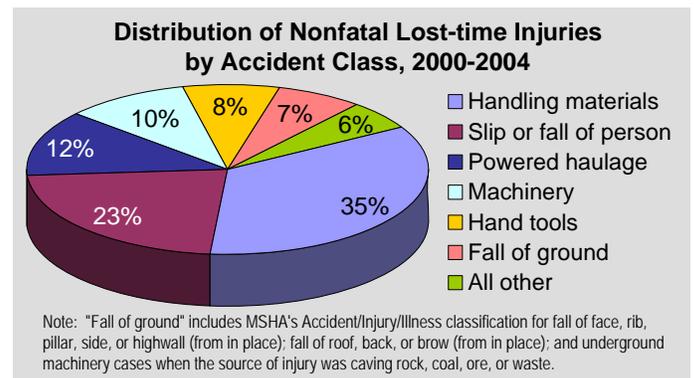
Five occupational **fatalities** occurred among coal contractor employees in 2004. These coal fatalities accounted for 38.5% of all fatalities attributed to independent contractors.

- The coal contractor fatality rate was 27.8 fatalities per 100,000 FTE employees. The underground fatality rate was 42.8 (n=1) compared to a rate of 25.6 (n=4) for surface work locations.



There were 469 **nonfatal lost-time injuries** among coal contractor employees (182 at underground and 287 at surface work locations) occurring at a rate of 2.6 injuries per 100 FTE employees. These injuries resulted in 33,061 days lost<sup>5</sup> from work, comprising 7.1% of days lost across all mining sectors.

- The underground nonfatal lost-time injury rate was greater than the surface injury rate (7.8 vs. 1.8 per 100 FTE workers).
- The most frequent classification of nonfatal lost-time injuries for coal contractor employees involved handling materials (n=150; 32.0%), followed by slip or fall of person (n=104; 22.2%).
- Sprains and strains were the most frequently reported nature of injury (n=183; 39.0%).
- The back was the most frequently reported part of the body injured (n=97; 20.7%) and accounted for 8,294 days lost from work.



In 2004, five cases of **occupational illnesses** were reported to MSHA by independent coal contractors.<sup>6</sup> This compares to 13 occupational illness cases reported in 2003.

- There were two cases of hearing loss or impairment, two cases of black lung (coal workers' pneumoconiosis), and one case of unclassified occupational diseases.

## Mining Characteristics, 2004

Commodity and Type of Employer	No. of Mines	No. of Companies	No. of Employees	No. of FTE Employees	Fatality Rate	Nonfatal Lost-time Injury Rate
Coal Operator	2,011	--	73,024	80,069	28.7	3.9
Metal Operator	251	--	25,205	26,091	7.7	2.1
Nonmetal Operator	741	--	19,432	20,183	5.0	2.7
Stone Operator	4,401	--	68,417	71,153	11.2	3.2
Sand and Gravel Operator	7,074	--	37,000	33,364	24.0	2.3
<b>Operator Total</b>	<b>14,478</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>223,078</b>	<b>230,860</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>3.2</b>
<b>Coal Contractor</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>2,550</b>	<b>30,228</b>	<b>17,964</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>2.6</b>
Noncoal Contractor	--	4,143	42,511	22,198	36.0	1.7
<b>Contractor Total</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>6,693</b>	<b>72,739</b>	<b>40,162</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>2.1</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>295,817</b>	<b>271,022</b>	<b>20.3</b>	<b>3.0</b>

Data may not add to totals due to independent rounding. Number of employees was rounded at the subunit level of each mine to be consistent with MSHA reporting. Fatality rates were computed per 100,000 FTE employees. Nonfatal lost-time injury rates were computed per 100 FTE employees.

**Data source:** Publicly released files of employment and accident/injury/illness data collected by MSHA under 30 CFR 50.

**Notes:** All analyses exclude office employees. Further statistical methodology is available on the NIOSH Internet [<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/statistics/method.htm>].

<sup>1</sup>Number of employees is the average number of persons working at individual establishments during calendar quarters of active operations. Employment numbers were rounded at the subunit level of each mine to be consistent with MSHA reporting.

<sup>2</sup>Full-time equivalent employees were computed using reported employee hours (2,000 hours = 1 FTE).

<sup>3</sup>Mining sectors: coal operators, metal operators, nonmetal operators, stone operators, sand and gravel operators, coal contractors, and noncoal contractors.

<sup>4</sup>Surface work locations include surface operations at underground mines (surface shops and yards, tippie physically located at the mine site), surface operations (strip or open pit mines including associated shops and yards), auger mining operations, culm banks (reworking of mine dumps or refuse pile), dredge (mining operations conducted from a platform floating on water), independent shops and yards not associated with a specific mine, and mill or preparation plant.

<sup>5</sup>Includes actual days away from work and/or days of restricted work activity. For permanently disabling injuries only, statutory days charged by MSHA were used if they exceeded the total lost workdays.

<sup>6</sup>Because of the complexity of attributing disease causation to the workplace, occupational illnesses may be underreported.

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**DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 2007-172**

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