Hard Hat Safety Award

Kinross Alaska Exploration Team

The Hard Hat Safety Award honors an AMA member, team, or organization that demonstrates an exemplary commitment to safety through outstanding practices, workforce engagement, and efforts to protect people throughout mining operations and related work.

The Alaska Miners Association is proud to recognize the Kinross Alaska Exploration Team with the 2026 Hard Hat Safety Award for its ingenuity, proactive hazard reduction, and commitment to making essential exploration work safer.

The team's improvements to core cutting demonstrate safety innovation in action. Employees developed and refined sound-dampening enclosures using readily available materials to reduce noise at its source. Initial measurements during active cutting showed approximately 105 decibels without an enclosure and approximately 90 decibels with one in place. The enclosures also helped contain loose material and reduce potential exposure to flying debris, dust, and mist.

To address the risk of hand injuries, the team introduced specially designed jigs that guide core through the saw while keeping employees' hands farther from the blade. These practical changes show how employee experience and creative problem-solving can lead to meaningful improvements in daily work.

Their approach shows that meaningful safety improvements can begin with employees recognizing a problem and developing practical, cost-conscious solutions.

The team continues to refine its approach and is working toward a fully enclosed automated core saw to further isolate employees from cutting hazards. By identifying risks, testing solutions, measuring results, and continuing to improve, the Kinross Alaska Exploration Team demonstrates a safety culture built on action. Congratulations to the team, and thank you for setting an example of thoughtful, proactive safety leadership.

