

UMWA, Rockefeller Call for Action on Black Lung

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — The United Mine Workers of America has joined Sen. Jay Rockefeller in criticizing the administration for its failure to enact regulations that could curb the rise of black lung disease.

Union President Cecil Roberts said Tuesday the disease is a terrible but preventable scourge, and current coal-dust standards put miners at unnecessary risk every day.

The Mine Safety and Health Administration has repeatedly delayed implementation of new dust rules, along with new rules for proximity detectors that could stop miners from being crushed by equipment underground.

In a letter to President Barack Obama, Rockefeller says he's disappointed by the delays. He wants the disease to become a priority.

Rockefeller recently introduced the Black Lung Health Improvements Act to help miners with claims and legal representation.

MSHA didn't immediately comment Tuesday.

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