

Case 35. 23-year-old millwright killed when a part he was unloading from the bed of a semi trailer fell onto him.

On September 3, 2003, a 23-year-old millwright was killed when a part he was unloading from the bed of a semi trailer fell onto him. The millwright was part of a crew unloading and installing a conveyor system inside a plant. He and a coworker had unloaded the intermediate and heel sections of the conveyor and were preparing to unload the head section. The head section of the conveyor was standing upright toward the front of the trailer secured by nylon web binder straps. It weighed approximately 2500 pounds and had a drive unit with a 20 horsepower electric motor located at its top that extended 2 feet past its side. Its base was 18 inches wide by 4 feet 6 inches long. It stood approximately 7 feet 6 inches high. The exact time when the last binder strap on the head section was released is unknown, but sometime after that and before the lifting and rigging equipment was attached to remove the piece from the truck, the part fell onto the millwright, fatally crushing him.

MIOSHA issued the following “Serious” violations to the employer.

1. The employer’s accident prevention program was inadequately maintained. Employees were not adequately trained to recognize the hazard created when ratcheting nylon binder’s safety released, or when to correctly release it. (GENERAL RULES, PART 1, RULE 114(1))
2. The employer did not ensure corrective measures were taken to ensure the safety of employees unloading an asymmetrical head section of a conveyor system off a semi trailer. (HANDLING AND STORAGE OF MATERIALS, PART 8, Rule R408.40818(2))
3. An employee with a permit who was operating an industrial forklift to unload asymmetrical sections of a conveyor system was inadequately trained in the requirements of Michigan’s Construction Safety Standard – Part 13. A second employee was operating an industrial forklift without a permit. (MOBILE EQUIPMENT, PART 13, RULE R408.41301 REF OSHA 1926.602(d)(3);1910.178(1))