

Case 400. 45-year-old foreman of a sign hanger crew died while taking a picture of a finished business mileage sign.

A 45-year-old male foreman of a sign hanging crew died while taking a picture of a finished business mileage sign. The bucket truck hauling the arrow board was completely parked-within the exit shoulder of the exit ramp with the outriggers down across the roadway. There was no roll-ahead area between the arrow board/bucket truck and the exit sign the crew was working on. The arrow board was flashing. A flatbed truck equipped with a bucket was parked ahead of the bucket truck/arrow board. The exit ramp curved to the right. The 3-person crew had successfully completed adding mileage plaques and arrows to two exit ramp signs. To document the completion of the sign changes, photographs were taken. The incident occurred while the decedent was taking a picture of the just-completed the second of the two exit sign changes. The decedent was standing between the bucket truck and the arrow board and one of his crew members was standing nearby on the shoulder edge. A semi tractor-trailer, as it was exiting the highway, struck the arrow board. There were no signs of braking by the semi driver. The collision caused the arrow board to move forward, striking the decedent and his coworker. The semi tanker jackknifed and the cab struck the flatbed truck, causing the semi cab to burn. All crew members were wearing their high-visibility vests, but had removed their hard hats and fall protection because they were done for the day.

MIOSHA Construction Safety and Health Division did not issue any violations but did issue the following Health and Safety Recommendations to the employer at the conclusion of its investigation:

An inspection/investigation of your worksite revealed the following conditions which may constitute a threat to the safety or health of your employees:

1. 408.42223(1) 2009 MMUTCD-Short duration – Figure 6H-4; page 641. There was not any distance between the arrow board sign and the work area. The billboard they were working on was in the grass near the front of the vehicle pulling the arrow board. This is a suggestion and not required. Obtain current TTC plan.
2. 408.40622(1) & 624(1) PPE shall be worn until employees get in their vehicles.