

Case 67. 49-year-old male agricultural laborer died while working in a 30-foot diameter metal grain bin with the 15-foot sweep auger running.

On September 7, 2004, a 49-year-old male agricultural laborer died while working in a 30-foot diameter metal grain bin with the 15-foot sweep auger running. The victim was working with another company employee in the grain bin cleaning the remaining corn from the bin using a flat plastic shovel. This bin was a newer bin and auger system; the victim may have been somewhat unfamiliar with the operation of this system. After working approximately 15 minutes, his coworker exited the bin while the victim remained inside to complete the task. There was no employee left outside the bin to observe and communicate with the victim. Several hours later, another employee who was working on another task outside noticed that the auger conveyors for unloading the bins were running without moving grain. This employee proceeded to check the bins and found that the auger for the bin where the victim was working was not running. He entered the bin to see if anyone was inside. There were two piles of corn; one was approximately 6 feet high by 8 feet wide and the other pile on the opposite side of the bin was approximately 3 feet wide by 10 feet tall. He found the victim after walking around the 6- by 8-foot pile of corn. The victim was lying on the floor in front of the sweep auger with his right arm entangled in the equipment. His coworker exited the bin, went to the power disconnects outside the bin, and deenergized all power to all of the augers and called for emergency services. Emergency response arrived and the victim was pronounced dead at the scene.

MIOSHA issued the following Serious citations to the employer:

Serious:

GRAIN HANDLING FACILITIES, PART 77, RULE 7707(4).

Prohibit employee entry into bins, silos and tanks without an observer stationed outside who is equipped to provide assistance.

Employee entered the bin without an observer stationed outside to provide assistance.

Serious:

GRAIN HANDLING FACILITIES, PART 77, RULE 7705(1)(a)(b).

Insure that employee training covers the following: Lockout/tagout procedures and bin entry procedures.

Employer has not trained employee to lock power on auger mechanisms (entire site).

No training on bin entry rescue procedure (entire site).

Serious:

GRAIN HANDLING FACILITIES, PART 77, RULE 7707(2)(a)(b)(c).
Prohibit employee entry into bins, silos and tanks without all equipment which presents a danger to employees being disconnected, locked out and tagged, blocked off, or prevented from operation by other means.

Employee entered silo bin to clean grain up from the floor. Employee failed to lockout sweep auger mechanism.