

Case 89. 53-year-old male machine repairman was killed when the mast of a pick and place unit he was repairing slipped from the fabric web sling that was supporting its weight and crushed him.

On Friday, October 29, 2004, a 53-year-old male was killed when the mast of a pick and place unit he was repairing slipped from the fabric web sling that was supporting its weight and crushed him. The decedent and a coworker were attempting to remove a jammed machine component called a lift block from under the pick and place unit. The problem was in an area where a yolk was attached to the bottom of the mast. In order to view and reach the affected area, he had lifted out a 16-inch wide by 21-inch high section of grated platform and had scooted on his back underneath the pick and place unit.

He was having difficulty freeing the part he wanted to move. He and his partner decided to raise and lower the mast manually to loosen the part, but the unit was equipped with a safety support bar that prevented the mast from being lowered beyond a given level. They removed the safety bar so that the mast could be lowered beyond the safety support bar stop position. They placed a fabric web sling on a two-inch protrusion on the mast which they attached to an overhead chain fall in order to raise and lower the mast with the manual chain hoist system. Apparently the decedent's partner had raised and lowered it once upon the decedent's instruction when he realized it felt too light. The fabric web sling had slipped from the mast protrusion causing the equipment to fall and crush the decedent's head.

MIOSHA issued the following three Serious citations to the employer.

Serious:

GENERAL PROVISIONS, PART, 1, RULE 34(12)

Prohibit employee from placing body beneath equipment such as vehicles, machines, or materials supported by any single supporting means such as a jack, overhead hoist or chain fall, unless safety stands, blocks, or other support system capable of supporting the total imposed weight is used to protect the employee in case of failure of the supporting system.

Only one single supporting means was used in two instances – 1. the employee's body was under the lift block assembly supported only by a come along and 2. the pick and place unit was only supported by the chain fall.

Serious:

HAND & PORTABLE POWERED TOOLS, PART 38, RULE 3811(a)

Ensure that an employee has been trained in the use of hand tools and portable powered tools before authorizing their use.

The machine repairmen are not properly trained on the proper use of the chain hoists, come a longs, and any other hand or portable lifting devices – safe rigging methods and procedures were needed to secure the load being lifted by the 2 ton overhead chain hoist.

Serious:

THE CONTROL OF HAZARDOUS ENERGY SOURCES, PART 85, RULE
1910.147(c)(4)(i) ADOPTED BY RULE 8502

Develop, document and utilize procedures for the control of potentially hazardous energy when employees are engaged in service or maintenance of machines or equipment where unexpected energization, start-up or release of stored energy could occur and cause injury.

Employees stand on pallister conveyor that was not locked out to operate chain hoist during repairs or adjustment.