

Case 94. 43-year-old worker was electrocuted while holding onto steel joists being moved with a boom crane.

On Monday, September 26, 2005, at approximately 2:00 p.m., a 43-year-old worker was electrocuted. He and another person were attempting to free discarded steel joists from weeds and vegetation near a chain-link fence at the edge of an equipment storage yard. The owner of the property had given them permission to remove them and sell them as scrap. The steel joists were approximately 39 feet long. The men were going to cut the joists into smaller pieces and then take them to the junkyard. They had secured a metal boom crane cable around the steel joists to lift them from the overgrown vegetation. They did not have the property owner's permission to use the boom crane. It had an expired license and had not been used for several years. It was necessary for them to find a charged battery to start it. The decedent's coworker was operating the boom crane they were using to raise the steel joists while the decedent was holding onto the steel joists to guide them. The boom crane operator indicated the steel load he was lifting was swinging and accidentally hit an overhead energized power line. A huge spark erupted when the cable contacted the energized line. The cable broke. A surge of electricity was sent through the cable and through the steel joists the decedent was guiding. When the boom cable broke, the decedent was freed. After the worker operating the boom saw the spark, he called to the decedent. Receiving no answer, he went to him and could get no response. 911 was called. The cause of death stated on the medical examiner's report was electrocution.

MIOSHA issued the following three Serious citations:

Serious:

CRAWLER, LOCOMOTIVE AND TRUCK CRANES, PART 19, RULE 1914.
The employee was not trained to operate a crane or boom crane.

Serious:

CRAWLER, LOCOMOTIVE AND TRUCK CRANES, PART 19, RULE 1936(3).
A proper distance was not maintained between the boom crane and the power lines.

Serious:

RECORDING AND REPORTING OF OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES AND
ILLNESSES, PART OSH 11, RULE 1139(1).
The employer did not report the fatality to MIOSHA within 8 hours of its occurrence.