

Case 160. 54-year-old machine operator was killed when a 9-foot steel beam weighing 2,500 pounds rolled on a cart causing the cart to tip allowing the beam to fall onto his lower extremities.

A 54-year-old male machine operator was killed when a 9-foot steel beam weighing 2,500 pounds rolled on a cart causing the cart to tip allowing the beam to fall onto his lower extremities. The beam was measured on an inspection table. After the beam measurements were taken, the decedent and another coworker moved the beam using a 2-ton overhead hoist to a homemade plastic cart. The beam chock hitched with one nylon sling. The cart was 30 inches by 40 inches and had two 4-inch by 4-inch wood blocks securely attached to the cart to make the surface level. The cart was rated for an 1,800-pound load. When they lifted the beam from the inspection table, they realized that the sling was placed too far toward one end of the beam. While on the cart, the decedent unhooked the nylon sling from the hoist hook and tried to reposition the sling to the middle of the beam. The decedent's coworker was returning measurement tools back into a nearby cabinet. The coworker observed the decedent attempting to roll the beam over on its flat side for another type of measurement and asked the decedent if he needed any help. The decedent indicated he did not require any help. The beam was not centered on the cart and when the decedent attempted to roll the beam to its flat side, the beam began to slide off of the cart when the cart's rear wheels came off of the ground. As the table tilted the beam fell and land on the decedent's lower extremities and crushed him. Coworkers reattached the sling to the beam to lift it from the decedent and called 911. The decedent was transported to a local hospital where he was declared dead.

MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division issued the following Serious citation to the employer:

ACT 154 PA OF 1974, SEC. 11(a).

Furnish to each employee employment and a place of employment, which is free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to the employee.

Employer allows employees to use a 30-inch by 40-inch portable table to place a 9-foot steel beam onto it for inspection. The beam weight was 2,500 pounds and the table was rated at 1,800 pounds.

Among other methods, one feasible and acceptable abatement method to correct this hazard is to provide an inspection table large enough to accept the weight and length of the beam being inspected.