

**Case 196. 50-year-old truck driver was killed when he was lowering a warehouse dock board into place while preparing to unload pallets of finished product from a tractor-trailer to the warehouse facility.**

A 50-year-old male truck driver was killed when he was lowering a warehouse dock board into place while preparing to unload pallets of finished product from a tractor-trailer to the warehouse facility. The decedent backed his truck into the bay for unloading, set the parking brake, chocked the wheels, and disconnected the brake lines air supply lines. There had been both a complete and partial power outage earlier in the day. The dock board was controlled by a push button control panel, located within two feet on the left wall when facing outdoors from the inside of the building. The 5/8-inch thick plate steel dock board measured 7 feet by 5 feet with a 20-inch lip and was estimated to weigh approximately 1,700-2,000 pounds. The decedent had stepped down into the open pit area of the dock board. This pit is designed for the mechanical parts and the board to be in when lowered to the down position. The decedent may have entered the pit area because it was easier to open and close the manual garage door. A possible scenario of events is as follows: It appeared that the decedent might have been attempting to manually lower the dock board because of the loss of power at the facility. The decedent released the lock pin and attempted to manually lower the dock board into place. With no hydraulic pressure present due to the power outage, the dock board free fell. The decedent did not have time to react while standing in the pit and was struck and caught between the dock board and pit layout. An employee coming in to open the warehouse for morning shift personnel found the decedent outside of the dock board on the left side facing out towards the open garage door and the back of the truck. Emergency response was called and the decedent was declared dead at the scene. The MIOSHA file indicated that several employees stated that this dock board had hydraulic fluid leaks and several areas with weld cracks. A hydraulic leak also could have been a contributing factor in the incident. The dock board was tested with full power to the assembly by responding departments later on the day of the incident and found to be in working order.

MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division issued the following alleged Serious citation at the conclusion of its investigation:

**SERIOUS:**

**GENERAL PROVISIONS, PART 1, RULE 11(a).**

Training should be provided to each newly assigned employee regarding the operating procedures, hazards, and/or safeguards of the job.

Inadequate training in that employees operating hydraulic dock board are not aware of hazards of manually lowering the unit when there is energy loss.