

Case 262. 45-year-old male press operator at a steel plant died when his clothing became entangled and caught in a one-inch-wide nip point between a vertical stationary plate and the bottom/return side of a conveyor belt.

45-year-old male press operator at a steel plant died when his clothing became entangled and caught in a one-inch-wide nip point between a vertical stationary plate and the bottom/return side of a conveyor belt. A parts washer fed the washed parts to a belt conveyor that angled slightly upward and then the parts fell to the shaker table. The parts then traveled down the table by vibration and fell into a tote at the discharge end. The plate was positioned just under the discharge end of the belt conveyor. The decedent, who was wearing a hard hat, was working near a two- to three-foot-wide shaker table located 57 inches above the ground. The end of the conveyor belt was located approximately one to three inches above the shaker table. The decedent's job task was to remove any parts from the shaker table that were dirty or unwanted. An in-running nip point hazard was exposed in the opening on the bottom or return portion of the v-belt at the roller and a stationary plate. The nip point was not accessible when standing on the floor level due to installed side plates on both sides. It is unknown why the decedent climbed onto the table. The decedent did not shut down the table as he climbed up/reached in toward the conveyor belt. He was found lying on the shaker table with his head wedged under the end of the belt conveyor with his clothing wrapped around his upper body and neck. Coworkers shut off the conveyor and lifted it from the decedent to free him. Emergency response was called and transported the decedent to a nearby hospital where he was declared dead. Company procedures required the shaker table to be shut down during cleaning.

MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division issued the following Serious citations at the conclusion of its investigation.

SERIOUS: MICHIGAN OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT, ACT 154, P.A. 1974, as amended, section 11(a):

The employer did not furnish to each employee, employment and a place of employment, which was free from recognized hazards that were causing or were likely to cause death or serious physical harm to the employee: No fall protection, employees climb onto shaker table 57 inches high.

SERIOUS: FLOOR AND WALL OPENINGS, STAIRWAYS, AND SKYLIGHTS, PART 2, RULE 220(1):

A flight of stairs, fixed industrial stairs, ramp, or a fixed ladder was not used to gain access to another elevation of more than 16 inches:

Inadequate means to gain access, employee climbing onto side and atop of shaker table 57 inches high, shaker table.

SERIOUS: CONVEYORS, PART 14

- RULE 1421(4):

A conveyor was not guarded so that an employee would not be caught or trapped between the conveyor and a stationary or moving part:

No guard, nip point exposed at discharge end of rubber belt conveyor and 1-inch gap to metal plate edge, belt conveyor.

- RULE 1442(4):

A pulley with rotating shaft shall have projecting shaft ends covered or cut flush with the hanger.

No guard, revolving shafts at discharge end of belt conveyor exposed to contact, both sides, about 72-inches high, belt conveyor.

SERIOUS: THE CONTROL OF HAZARDOUS ENERGY SOURCES, PART 85

- RULE 1910.147(c)(4)(i):

Procedures were not developed, documented and utilized for the control of potentially hazardous energy when employees were engaged in activities covered by Part 85:

Not enforcing lockout, per employee interviews, employees climb onto shaker table to clean, employees within reach of in-running nip point just below end of belt conveyor.

- RULE 1910.147(c)(7)(i)(A):

Authorized employee(s) did not receive training in the recognition of applicable hazardous energy sources, the type and magnitude of the energy available in the workplace, and the methods and means necessary for energy isolation and control:

Inadequate lockout training, employees instructed to turn off shaker table and belt conveyor prior to climbing onto table to clean, not locking out.