

Case 282. 29-year-old certified diesel mechanic died when he was struck by an exploding rim of a tractor-trailer tire.

A 29-year-old male certified diesel mechanic died when he was struck by an exploding rim of a tractor-trailer tire. A customer brought in a tractor trailer unit which had a flat tire. After removing the tire, the decedent obtained a replacement tire that was mounted on a 3-piece rim manufactured in 1960 and set it against an overhead door frame. With the driver observing the decedent, the decedent checked the air pressure of the replacement tire. The driver informed the MIOSHA compliance officer that the tire had approximately 70 psi and that the decedent indicated the tire needed a little more air pressure. The MIOSHA compliance officer noted that the air pressure on the gauge from the air compressor was approximately 190 psi. The decedent was kneeling down in the path of trajectory in front of the tire and rim adding a couple of pounds of pressure at a time. He was using an air gauge with a magnifying lens and short hose, not a clip-on chuck with a sufficient hose length or an inline regulator with a preset desired tire pressure. The truck driver was looking away when he heard a loud explosion. The driver looked back and saw the decedent approximately 5 feet away from the tire, lying on the floor unresponsive. The decedent's head was struck by the exploding rim; the tire was still intact. The rim had split into two pieces. The driver went to the office and informed them of the incident. Office personnel called for emergency response. The decedent was declared dead at the scene.

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

SERIOUS: AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE OPERATIONS, PART 72.

- **RULE 7211(d):**
A copy of Part 72, "Automotive Service Operations," was not maintained for employees' review: Firm did not maintain a copy of the MIOSHA standard Part 72, *Automotive Service Operations*, for employees review – Repair Garage Area
- **RULE 7235(1):**
An employer shall ensure that each employee who is engaged in servicing multi-piece and single-piece rims demonstrates and maintains his or her ability to service the rims safely and in accordance with these rules.

It was not ensured that each employee who was engaged in servicing multi-piece rims demonstrated and maintained his or her ability to service the rims safely.

- **RULE 7237(2):**
A rim manual, as prescribed in the rule 7206(3) of Part 72, which contains instructions for the types of wheels serviced, was not available in the service area:

Firm did not have a rim safety manual – Maintenance Garage.

- **RULE 7235(5):**
A clip-on chuck with a sufficient length of hose to permit the employee to stand clear of the potential trajectory of the wheel components and an in-line valve with a gauge or a pressure regulator preset to the desired pressure was not furnished by the employer and used to inflate tires;

Firm did utilize a clip on chuck with an in-line valve with a gage or a pressure regulator preset to the desired pressure available from the employer and used to inflate tires. – Maintenance garage.

- RULE 7236(5):
Tires were not inflated only when constrained by a restraining device, except when the wheel assembly was on a vehicle:

Tire was inflated while not being mounted on the vehicle or contained in a safety cage or restraining device. – Maintenance Garage.

- RULE 7237(8):
An employee did not stay out of the potential trajectory of the wheel when inflating a tire and was not prohibited from leaning or placing a rim wheel on or against any flat solid surface:

Employee did not stay out of the path or trajectory of wheel – Maintenance Garage.