

Case 308. 27-year-old service technician for a tire company died when the manure spreader tire he was servicing at a farm exploded.

A 27-year-old male service technician for a tire company died when the manure spreader tire he was servicing at a farm exploded, striking him in the head and neck. The single-pieced rim tire was not in a cage or mounted on the manure spreader; it was laying flat on the ground on a mat. The decedent was dispatched to install a semi-tire inter-tube on the manure spreader. The decedent removed the semi tire from the manure spreader and placed the tire flat on the ground on a work mat. To fill the tire, the decedent leaned over the tire which placed him in the path of trajectory. He was holding the tire stem with a pair of pliers in one hand and the air hose in the other hand when either the inter-tube or the tire burst, causing the rim on the bottom to slip past the tire and rise up. The firm did not have an inline valve with a gauge or a pressure regulator preset to the desired pressure available. The air compressor was set at 180 pounds per square inch. The escaping pressures caused the tire/rim to launch straight up, striking him in the neck, head and shoulder area. Both the tire and the decedent's body were found several feet away from the mat where the tire had been placed to perform the work. When the decedent did not answer his cell phone, a coworker traveled to the job site. The coworker called emergency response upon finding the decedent. The decedent was declared dead on the scene.

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

SERIOUS: AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE OPERATIONS, PART 72

- 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 not have an in-line valve with a gauge or a pressure regulator preset to the desired pressure available – Job Site at farm)

- 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 – Job Site at farm)

- 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 of trajectory – Job Site at farm)

OTHER-THAN-SERIOUS: RECORDING AND REPORTING OF OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES AND ILLNESSES, PART II, RULE 1139(1):

An oral report of a work-related incident resulting in a fatality or the inpatient hospitalization of three or more employees was not made within eight hours after the occurrence to the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth, Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration, State Secondary Complex, 7150 Harris Drive, P.O. Box 30644, Lansing, MI 48909, phone 1-800-858-0397.

(Not reporting a work place fatality within 8 hours of the occurrence)