

Case 316. 36-year-old landscaping company mechanic died when he was struck by a trailer's 20-pound stop block while lowering the trailer height.

A 36-year-old male mechanic for a landscaping company died when he was struck by a trailer's 20-pound stop block while lowering the trailer height. The decedent had previously unloaded a Caterpillar 416b backhoe from a Talbert Hydroneck low boy heavy haul trailer. The decedent and the truck's driver were unhooking the low boy from a Peterbilt 357 truck and lowering the front of the trailer onto some 4x4 cribbing so that the truck could be uncoupled from the trailer. The decedent told the driver that the cribbing was not high enough on the right side and asked the driver to hydraulically raise the trailer. After inserting another piece of wood, the decedent told the driver to lower the trailer. As the trailer was again being lowered the driver heard a "pop". As he walked around the gooseneck, he observed the deceased laying on the ground. The approximately 20-pound stop block located between the gooseneck and the trailer frame had dislodged from its mount and had struck the decedent in the chin causing fatal injuries. The 3-inch diameter steel pin that contacted the block was slightly bent suggesting the inboard side of the block was pinched causing outward pressure and may account for the block being dislodged from its mount with tremendous force. The stop block was found approximately 15 feet away from the truck. No cotter pin was found on scene. There were no eyewitnesses or evidence to suggest the pin was bent prior to this incident.

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

SERIOUS: GENERAL PROVISIONS, PART 1, RULE 11(a):

Training was not provided to each newly assigned employee regarding the operating procedures, hazards, and/or safeguards of the job.

(No training provided to an employee, Talbert Hydroneck heavy haul trailer – Landscape Yard)