

Case 376. 14-year-old farm worker was working with family members on a family dairy farm when she became entangled in an elevator conveyor's chain and sprocket.

A 14-year-old female farm worker was working with family members on a family dairy farm when she became entangled in an elevator conveyor's chain and sprocket. The decedent was throwing hay bales from a horse-teamed trailer onto a steel table which would gravity slide the bales onto the elevator to carry the bales up to the loft of a barn. The 20-25 foot long elevator conveyor's chain and sprocket was powered by a Case International tractor's power take off (PTO) shaft. The PTO knuckle that was coupled to the chain and sprocket drive of the elevator's conveyor had been guarded with a 3-4 foot long, 8" diameter section of drain pipe. The elevator conveyor's chain and sprocket were unguarded. According to witnesses, the decedent had overthrown a hay bale and it had to be placed onto the conveyor. The decedent jumped down from the trailer, and walked around to the side where the tractor's PTO and conveyor's chain and sprocket were located. While aligning the bale onto the elevator, her dress and eventually her hair became entangled in the conveyor's chain and sprocket. She then became entangled in the PTO shaft. A family member turned off the tractor. Other family members unsuccessfully attempted to free her and called for emergency response. Emergency response arrived and she was declared dead at the scene.

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

SERIOUS: FARM FIELD AND EQUIPMENT, AG PART 53 [REF 408.45301], RULE 1928.57(a)(7)(i):

Except as otherwise provided in this sub part, each employer shall protect employees from coming into contact with hazards created by moving machinery parts as follows:

- (i) Through the installation and use of a guard or shield or guarding by location;
- (ii) Whenever a guard or shield or guarding by location is infeasible, by using a guardrail or fence.
 - a. The chain and sprocket of the Power-Take-Off-driven elevator was not guarded, causing entanglement of a farm worker and clothing while loading straw bales into barn. This sub-item was corrected during inspection.
 - b. The guard on the Power-Take-Off- shaft was inadequate, in that it did not cover the knuckle connection to the elevator.

SERIOUS: RECORDING AND REPORTING OF OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES AND ILLNESSES, ADM PART 11, RULE 408322139(1):

Fatalities. Within 8 hours after the death of any employee from a work-related incident, you must report the fatality by telephone to the MIOSHA toll-free central telephone number: 1-800-858-0397.

(The employer did not report the work-related fatality that occurred *date and time removed by MIFACE* to MIOSHA.)