

Case 381. 63-year-old business owner died due to asphyxia when she was wedged between an electrical box and the business's stationary security chain link fence after being struck by a moving motorized security gate.

A 63-year-old female business owner died due to asphyxia when she was wedged between an electrical box and the business's stationary security chain link fence after being struck by a moving motorized security gate. The decedent was leaving the business for the evening and rather than using the motorized gate control located in a building adjacent to the security fence to open the closed gate, she drove her car to the gate entrance. She exited her car, leaving it running, to manually key open the gate. The keyed control box was located on the opposite side of the gate, facing outward (facing away from her). She inserted the keys and when the motorized gate began to move, she was struck by the leading edge of the sliding gate and was pinned by the sliding gate in the 10-inch distance between an electrical box and the stationary fence. It is unknown if she stepped onto the bottom of the gate or fence and reached over it or if she reached through the chain link fence to insert the keys. The sliding gate was open a few feet when an employee beginning work the next day found her. Emergency response was summoned and she was declared dead. The gate did not have a safety device, slip clutch, or sensor to stop the leading edge if an individual/equipment was struck by it.

The MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health division issued the following Serious citation to the firm at the conclusion of its investigation:

SERIOUS: GENERAL PROVISIONS, GI PART 1, RULE 408.10034(9):

When an employee is exposed to a hazard created by a pinch point other than point of operation, the hazard shall be guarded or the employee otherwise protected.

(There was no guard or device for the pinch point between the leading edge of the motorized sliding gate and electrical box and stationary fencing. The employer was struck by and pinned between an electrical box and fencing on *incident date* when she activated the opening of the motorized gate by reaching over it to the opposite side and inserted her key into the control box.) (*MIFACE removed the date of the incident*).