

Case 406. 56-year-old welding foreman was struck by the “door” of the empty metal rack that was being “flipped” by a powered industrial truck operator.

A 56-year-old male welding foreman was struck by the “door” of the empty metal rack that was being flipped by a powered industrial truck (PIT) operator. The metal rack had an unsecured top tray (door). The decedent had his back to the PIT operator. The PIT operator sounded the horn and then yelled to the decedent that he was about to flip the metal rack. As the PIT operator flipped the rack, the decedent stepped back, and the unsecured rack door flipped downward, striking him on his lower back. Several days later, the decedent sought medical attention because of difficulty breathing. He was hospitalized and died several weeks later. The cause of death on the death certificate was blunt trauma to the back.

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

SERIOUS: POWERED INDUSTRIAL TRUCKS, GI PART 21.

- RULE 408.12172(1):

An operator shall safeguard other employees at all times.

(An employee working in the weld area was struck by the swing arm/tray on a fabricated rack when the rack was being flipped over by the operator of a powered industrial truck.)

- RULE 408.12153(1):

An employer shall test an employee before authorizing the employee to operate a powered industrial truck, except a motorized hand truck. The test shall check the employees:

(a) Operating ability.

(b) Knowledge of the equipment.

(c) Knowledge of state safety standard rules 2171 of Part 21. Powered Industrial Trucks, being R 408.12171 to R 408.12193 of the Michigan Administrative Code.

(d) Knowledge of daily checks.

(There was no testing of the powered industrial truck operator prior to re-issuance of an operating permit.)

SERIOUS: RECORDING AND REPORTING OF OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES AND ILLNESSES, ADM PART 11, RULE 408.22139(1):

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.

(A work-related fatality was not reported to MIOSHA within 8 hours.)