

CSI Country Wide Case Study Safety Strategy Discussion

Construction Safety Investigator



Instructions

The objective of this tool is to provide field supervisors with information to proactively engage workers and discuss safety related concerns that they may encounter. Safety discussions should not be limited to the subject above and should pertain to the activities that workers will be involved in that may have the potential for safety related exposures.

Case Day:

September 2009

Accident Type:

Demolition - Walking and Working Surfaces

Relevant laws, rules and codes may include:

29CFR 1926.20(a)(1), 1926.21(b)(2), 1926.850 through 1926.860

Case:

A 29 year-old construction laborer working for a demolition contractor was killed when he fell into an open floor chute.

Accident Detail:

The worker (deceased) was part of a six-man demolition crew, deconstructing an office building. He was separating lightweight steel from concrete debris as walls and other structures were torn down.

Once debris was separated, the workers were assisted by an equipment operator using a Bobcat™ with a bucket attachment to push the debris down “chutes” (holes cut into floor) that were approximately eight feet by eight feet in size. Chutes are created so material/debris can be dropped to lower floors for easy removal.

To access the chute, the operator used the Bobcat to push aside a steel plate being used as a hole cover for the chute. He then drove the Bobcat to a debris pile, when he noticed one worker trying to separate a larger piece of steel from another pile of debris.

As the worker pulled the piece of steel, it suddenly gave way causing the worker to lose his balance, falling backwards and down into the chute and continuing to the basement level.

Reconstructive Safety Evaluation:

- What are some of the possible causes of the accident being discussed?
- What actions could have been taken that might have prevented this accident from occurring?

Accident Scene Conclusion:

The investigation revealed that the worker was new to the job as well as to demolition and had not yet been trained in all safe work practices. He was assigned to work with another crew member who was experienced in demolition but he had left the area for a short time when this incident occurred. The company did not use job safety task analysis to pre-plan operations and this crew did not conduct a pre-work meeting on the day of this accident.

Preventive Safety Measures Include:

- All operations are preplanned using a Job Safety Task Analysis (JSTA) to ensure potential safety hazards associated with an operation are identified and appropriate steps are taken to eliminate or control them.
- Workers should be trained in the hazards of the work they are to perform, the personal protective equipment and safe work procedures necessary to perform their assigned tasks.
- During demolition operations, any chutes or other openings where workers may come into contact with the opening shall be protected by a substantial guardrail at least 42 inches high or by other means of appropriate fall protection designed and incorporated into the operation to protect the workers exposed to falls.

Attendance Roster

Reference: This case is fictitious, and any resemblance to any persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental. However, the type of accident described in this case summary happens all too often on construction sites.



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