

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:

May 4, 2005

Accident Type:

Wood Chipper Accident - Caught Between

Relevant laws, rules and codes may include:

ANSI z133.1-1994, 29 CFR 1926.21(b)(2), 1926.20(b)(3) and (4), 29 CFR 1910.212(a)(1), 29 CFR

1910.212(a)(3), OSHA Hazards of Wood Chippers Safety and Health Information Bulletin #SHIB 04-16-2008.

Case:

A 42 year-old worker died after he was caught and pulled into a brush chipper.

Accident Detail:

The victim was a day laborer who had worked for the company for approximately two weeks.

On the day of the incident, the victim and his employer, the owner, were trimming/ chipping trees and brush when the owner had climbed a tree to cut branches. The owner then passed them down to the victim. The victim then fed the limbs through the brush chipper.

After passing a few limbs to the victim, the owner heard the victim yelling and saw that he was being pulled into the chipper. The owner climbed down and discovered that the brush chipper had shut off and that only the victim's hand was visible in the feed chute.

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:

Investigation indicated that the victim was Guatemalan, spoke Spanish and reportedly neither spoke nor understood English well.

Workers without proper training are at great risk of being pulled into and through the chipper knives. This can occur if the worker loses balance and falls forward into the feed chute, reaches too far into the feed mechanism, or becomes entangled or pushed by branches and limbs that are being pulled into the chipper.

Preventive Safety Measures Include:

- Ensure that workers fully understand and strictly follow the safe operating, troubleshooting, and machine maintenance procedures recommended by the manufacturers when operating brush chippers.
- Train workers in safe and proper feeding techniques to avoid the hazard of being pulled into an operating brush chipper.
- Ensure that the safety instructions and training are provided in a language that workers are able to comprehend.
- Designate another employee as a safety watch to assist the brush chipper operator.
- Ensure that the area in front of the in-feed hopper is free of tripping hazards.

Attendance Roster

Reference: This case was reported in the NIOSH Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program, Report #05NY034.

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