



SafeTalk



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Study says Contracting Out Causes Problems with Hazard Assessment and Supervision



USW District 3 health and safety coordinator Ron Corbeil notes that many falling contractors are owner-operators that work where there isn't proper supervision or planning.

A study conducted by a WorkSafe BC internal investigation team, which examined 32 faller deaths and serious injuries has confirmed that contracting out has made faller supervision and risk assessment more difficult.

In 19 of the 32 incidents examined between 2000-2008, there was insufficient hazard assessments conducted. In half the incidences, supervisors were working fallers themselves and 11 supervisors did not have a clear grip on safe falling methods.

The study said that the use of many small contractors of 5 or less workers "make quality control of faller and supervisory work more difficult."

Twenty-Eight of the 32 cases reviewed, planning done by all parties did not include the full identification of workplace hazards.

Contributing factors included the nature of the terrain and slope stability, tree type, wind conditions and natural and man made obstacles. Full study :

http://www.fwsn.org/pdf/web_faller_fatal_review2009.pdf

Coming Events

August 17-21 Int'l HS&E Conference, Houston Texas

Sept. 23-24 SHARP Conference, Prince George BC

Oct 2 Vancouver Island Safety Conference, Qualicum BC

July Ends Tragically South of the Border

Shortly after midnight Sunday morning, July 26, Angela Smith was killed at Arcelor Mittal's Indiana Harbor Works. She was a member of Local union 1010 in District 7. She was 37 years old, with two young daughters. Angela was working in the 80-inch slab yard. It appears that she was hit by the gantry crane and dragged for some distance. She may also have been pulled into the reduction gearing. She was the 3rd woman killed in a USW workplace, and the 4th person killed in the USW-represented steel industry.

Enner Perez Vega, a contractor employee, was seriously injured at Goodyear's Fayetteville, NC plant at around 5 AM, July 28; our members there are represented by Local 959, District 9. The investigation has just begun, and initial impressions are often wrong, but the facts as we understand them are as follows: Mr. Vega was loading scrap tires into a tractor-trailer using a walk-behind lift truck. The trailer was damaged, with a large hole in the floor, and had been taken out of service. However, it was left in place with no barricade or signage. Mr. Vega's left leg went into the hole, and as he fell the lift truck ran over him, almost completely severing his leg. He was in the 10th hour of a 12 hour overnight shift. Vega has undergone several surgeries attempting to reattach his leg.

USW member Cason Hosch was fatally injured in an explosion and fire a little before 4 PM on July 29th at Mueller Copper Tube, in Fulton, Mississippi, represented by USW Local Union 8420, District 9. He was 29 years old and engaged to be married. He was in his fourth month of employment in the plant. Two other employees were burned in the fire. One was treated and released. The other was airlifted to a burn center in Jackson. We do not know his condition. The investigation has just begun, and initial impressions are: Mueller Tube uses naphtha to clean equipment and product at many stages in the operation. As the naphtha was being pumped from a tote container into a holding tank, it either was spilled or the vapors somehow formed an explosive mixture with air in the equipment. The explosion occurred when the vapors found a source of ignition. One possible source was static electricity, which can build up in such transfer operations unless special precautions are taken. This accident was the third fatality at this plant since April of last year. Brother Hosch was the 17th USW member to die on the job from occupational causes this year. Four contractors and one supervisor have also died at USW workplaces.

These accidents mark a sad milestone for the ERT program. For the first time we have on-site investigations at four sites simultaneously. Our sincere condolences go out to the families and friends of these brothers and sisters.

HAZARD ALERT

THE DANGERS OF SILICA DUST

What is Silica

Silica is the basic component of sand and rock. The best known and most abundant type of crystalline silica is quartz. Some common silica-containing materials include:

- Concrete, concrete block, cement, and mortar
- Masonry, tiles, brick, and refractory brick
- Granite, sand, fill dirt, and top soil
- Asphalt-containing rock or stone
- Abrasive used for blasting

Silica is so common that any workplace activity that creates dust can expose workers to airborne silica.

Are You Exposed to Silica Dust

If you do any of the following activities, you are at risk of breathing silica dust:

- Chipping, sawing, grinding, hammering, or drilling of rock, concrete, or masonry structures
- Crushing, loading, hauling, or dumping of rock
- Many building demolition processes
- Power cutting or dressing stone
- Facade renovation, including tuck-point work
- Abrasive or hydro blasting of concrete
- Clean-up activities such as dry sweeping or pressurized air blowing of concrete or sand dust
- Tunneling, excavation, or earth moving of soils with high silica content



Rock drilling without dust controls.



Rock crushing without dust controls.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PROTECT WORKERS FROM SILICA DUST

- Change the material - Substitute crushed glass, olivine, or other material for silica sand in abrasive blasting.
- Change the process - Design buildings with pre-built recesses for plumbing, gas, and electric wiring so there is less need to cut or drill masonry and concrete.
- Provide engineering controls - Use local exhaust ventilation or water spray systems to reduce dust levels. Use barriers to restrict access by unprotected workers.
- Provide appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as respirators and protective clothing.
- Train workers on the dangers of silica exposure, and how to use dust controls and PPE.
- Develop and implement an exposure plan for silica. An effective plan must include purpose and responsibilities, hazard assessment, controls, education, training, written safe work procedures, washing or decontamination facilities, health monitoring, and documentation.

IMPRESSIVE LINE-UP OF SPEAKERS AT INTERNATIONAL HS&E CONFERENCE

Jordan Barab-Deputy Assistant Secretary and Acting Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health

Jordan Barab joined OSHA as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health as well as Acting Assistant Secretary on April 13, 2009.

Dennis C. Hendershot-Chemical Engineer

Dennis C. Hendershot is a chemical engineer (BS, Lehigh University and MS, University of Pennsylvania) with 39 years of experience.

Les Leopold-Executive Director of the Labor Institute and Public Health Institute

Les attended Oberlin College and Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs (MPA 1975). He designs research and educational programs on occupational safety and health, the environment and economics. He is now helping to form an alliance between the United Steel Workers Union and the Sierra Club. Les is the author of *The Man who Hated Work and Loved Labor: The Life and Times of Tony Mazzocchi*.

Glenn S. Podonsky-Chief Health, Safety and Security Officer

Mr. Glenn S. Podonsky is the Energy Department's Chief Health, Safety and Security Officer.

Steven Markowitz, MD-Specializing in Occupational and Environmental Medicine

Dr. Markowitz is currently Director of the Center for the Biology of Natural Systems (CBNS) and Professor of Environmental Sciences at Queens College, City University of New York.

Peg Seminario-Director of Safety and Health, AFL-CIO

Peg Seminario is the Director, Safety and Health at the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). She has been the recipient of many national respected honors and awards during her career such as the Alice Hamilton Award from the American Industrial Hygiene Association in 2001 and received the William Lloyd Award from the United Steelworkers in 1997.

Dr. Michael P. Wilson-Research Scientist with the Center for Occupational and Environmental Health (COEH)

Michael P. Wilson, PhD, MPH, is a research scientist with the Center for Occupational and Environmental Health (COEH), School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley.

Mark R. Briggs-CSP - OSHA Safety Engineer

Mark graduated with his Bachelor of Science Degree in Engineering/Industrial Engineering from New Mexico State University. He has been a Compliance Officer with OSHA since 1989.

Dr. Julie Zimmerman-Assistant Professor - Yale University

Dr. Julie Beth Zimmerman is an Assistant Professor jointly appointed in the School of Engineering and Applied Science (Environmental Engineering Program) and the School of Forestry and Environment at Yale University.

Steven Greenhouse-Labor and workplace reporter for the New York Times

He is also the author of *The Big Squeeze: Tough Times for the American Worker*. His first book, *The Big Squeeze* is an in-depth account of how American companies have squeezed millions of workers by clamping down on wages, cutting benefits, weakening job security and violating wage and hour laws.