

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

Underground  
(Marble)

Falling, Rolling, or Sliding Rock or Material of Any Kind Accident Fatality Report  
January 19, 2026

Vermont Quarries Corp.  
Danby Quarry  
Danby, Rutland County, Vermont  
ID No. 43-00042

Accident Investigator

Andrew Grabo  
Mine Safety and Health Inspector

Originating Office  
Mine Safety and Health Administration  
Warrendale District  
178 Thorn Hill Road, Suite 100  
Warrendale, PA 15086  
Peter Montali, District Manager

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## OVERVIEW

On January 19, 2026, at approximately 10:00 a.m., Joseph Jaworski, Sr., a 71-year-old mill saw operator with 32 years of experience, was injured when an unsecured marble slab struck him. On April 2, 2026, Jaworski died from complications related to those injuries.

The accident occurred because the mine operator did not properly store and support materials to prevent fall-of-material hazards.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Vermont Quarries Corp. owns and operates Danby Quarry. The Danby Quarry is an underground marble mine located in Danby, Rutland County, Vermont. The mine employs 22 miners and operates two 8-hour shifts, 6 days per week. The mine uses wire and undercutting saws to extract large blocks of marble. Front-end loaders are used to transport the unfinished blocks from the face to the underground mill for further processing. Wire saws, gang saws, and polishers are used to produce finished products. The finished products are used for countertops, monuments, and architectural products.

The principal management officials at Danby Quarry at the time of the accident were:

Luca Manolini  
Keith Millard

General Manager  
Quarry Manager

The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) completed the last regular safety and health inspection at this mine on December 4, 2025. The 2025 nonfatal days lost incident rate for the Danby Quarry was 3.73, compared to the national average of 1.46 for mines of this type.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On January 19, 2026, at 7:00 a.m., Jaworski started his shift by clocking in at the underground office and traveling to the mill trim saw area where he began work alone. He began his shift by marking large blocks of marble to cut into slabs, approximately 4,500 pounds in weight. He then made the cuts using a wire saw in preparation for further processing with gang saws. The wire saw uses an endless wire rope with embedded diamonds to cut through the blocks of marble (Appendix A). After the marble slabs were cut with the trim saw, the slabs remained stacked vertically for loading and transport by the front-end loader. Jaworski continued to work alone in the trim saw area until he took a break at 9:00 a.m. Jaworski interacted with other employees during the break.

Around 9:15 a.m., Jaworski returned to the trim saw area alone to perform final cuts to the block. Jaworski then contacted Kenny Abbott, front-end loader operator, to remove the finished marble slabs and waste slabs from the trim saw area. Abbott transferred the first three slabs to the storage and waste area. While Abbott was away, Jaworski remained in the trim saw area alone. Abbott returned to the trim saw area, loaded the fourth slab, and transported it to the storage and waste area. Abbott observed Jaworski standing next to the fifth slab.

At 10:10 a.m., James Heavens, mechanic, was working in the mechanic's shop nearby, when he heard a slab of marble fall. Heavens went to the trim saw area where he saw that Jaworski had been struck by a marble slab and was lying face down partially beneath the fallen slab. Heavens immediately yelled to Tonya Powers, secretary, to call 911. Powers called 911 at 10:10 a.m. Heavens, Abbott, and Keith Millard, quarry manager, responded to provide first aid. At 10:26 a.m., the Danby Mt-Tabor Fire Department and Northshire EMS traveled into the mine to render care. EMS transported Jaworski out of the mine.

Jaworski was then transferred to a Life Net helicopter which transported him to the University of Vermont Hospital, located in Burlington, Vermont. Jaworski remained under the care of the University of Vermont Hospital for internal injuries and multiple broken bones until 12:59 p.m. on April 2, 2026, when Erica Lash, MD, pronounced Jaworski dead due to complications related to those injuries.

## INVESTIGATION OF THE ACCIDENT

On January 19, 2026, at 10:23 a.m., Tonya Powers, secretary, called the Department of Labor National Contact Center (DOLNCC). The DOLNCC contacted Kevin Abel, assistant district manager. Abel contacted Brandt Berryann, supervisory mine safety and health inspector, who contacted Andrew Grabo, mine safety and health inspector. Grabo was assigned as the lead accident investigator and dispatched to the mine to investigate the accident. At 2:20 p.m., Grabo arrived at the mine and issued an order under the provisions of Section 103(k) of the Mine Act to ensure the safety of the miners and preservation of evidence. Grabo investigated the accident scene; interviewed miners, mine management, and other relevant personnel; and reviewed the conditions and practices relevant to the accident. Refer to Appendix B for a list of persons who participated in the investigation.

## DISCUSSION

### Location of the Accident

The accident occurred at the underground mill trim saw area (Appendix C).

### Equipment Involved

The wire saw involved in the accident was a Marathon LGR4INVTC. The investigator conducted an examination of the wire saw and found no defects that contributed to the accident.

### Examinations

On the day of the accident, Jaworski conducted a workplace examination of the mill trim saw area prior to making any cuts to the marble blocks. No hazards were noted on the examination record. The investigator determined that the workplace examination was adequate and did not contribute to the accident.

### Training and Experience

Jaworski had over 32 years of mining experience, all at Danby Quarry. On April 2, 2024, Jaworski received task training on the wire saw. Jaworski most recently received Annual Refresher Training on February 25, 2025. Jaworski received all training in accordance with MSHA Part 48 training regulations. The investigator determined training did not contribute to the accident.

### Work Procedures

The mine operator had work procedures in place regarding cutting, storing, and supporting cut marble slabs. Marble blocks are cut into slabs using a wire saw with an endless wire rope of embedded diamonds. After cutting, the slabs remain stacked vertically in rows on wooden cribbing until they are loaded and transported by front-end loaders.

The mine operator had a policy requiring that the front-end loader be used to block the motion of the unsupported marble slabs prior to any miner entering the area immediately in front of the stacked slabs. When the slabs were not supported by the front-end loader, no miners were to enter the area in front of the slabs. At the time of the accident, the front-end loader had left the mill trim saw area to transport a cut slab, leaving the next marble slab unsupported. Jaworski

entered the area immediately in front of the unsupported marble slab and was crushed when the slab fell forward. Investigators determined that the procedures for storing and supporting the cut marble slabs were not followed. Additionally, investigators determined that the procedures for supporting the cut marble slabs with the front-end loader were not adequate because the procedure did not prevent a fall-of-material hazard when the front-end loader was not in place, which contributed to the accident.

#### ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

The accident investigator conducted an analysis to identify the underlying causes of the accident. The accident investigator identified the following root cause, and the mine operator implemented the corresponding corrective action to prevent a recurrence.

1. Root Cause: The mine operator did not properly store and support materials to prevent fall-of-material hazards.

Corrective Action: The mine operator installed a new concrete pad with metal tracks and bars so that marble slabs can be properly stored and to prevent fall-of-material hazards to miners working in the area (Appendix A).

## CONCLUSION

On January 19, 2026, Joseph Jaworski Sr., a 71-year-old mill saw operator with 32 years of experience, was injured when an unsecured slab of marble struck him. On April 2, 2026, at 12:59 p.m., Jaworski died from complications related to those injuries.

The accident occurred because the mine operator did not properly store and support materials to prevent fall-of-material hazards.

Approved by:

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Peter Montali  
District Manager

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Date

## ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS

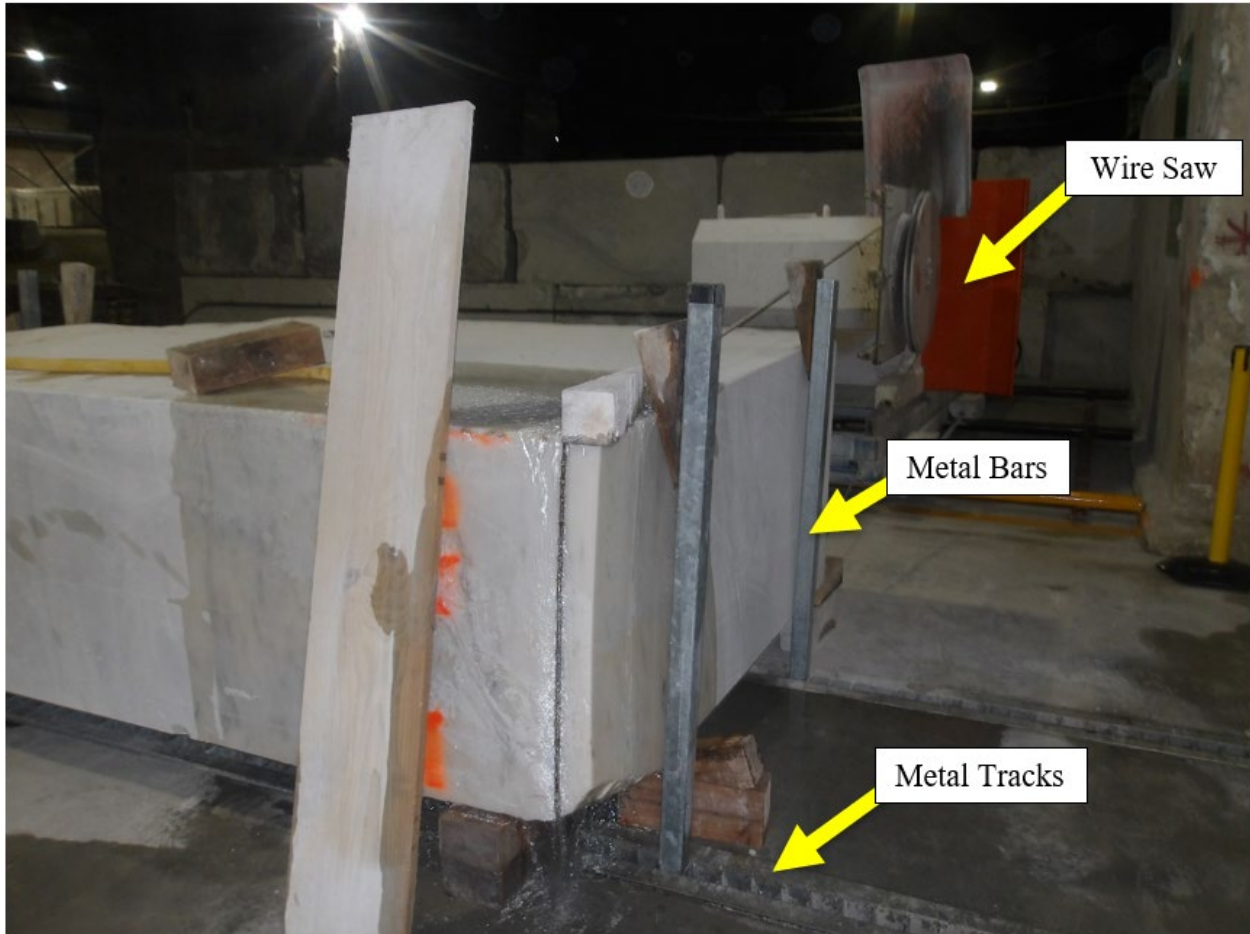
1. A 103(k) order was issued to Vermont Quarries Corp.

An accident occurred on January 19, 2026, at approximately 10:10 a.m. This order is being issued under the authority of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977, under Section 103(k) to insure the safety of all persons at the mine, and requires the operator to obtain the approval of an authorized representative of MSHA of any plan to recover any person in the mine or to recover the mine or affected area. This order prohibits any activity in the affected area. The operator is reminded of the obligation to preserve all evidence that would aid in investigating the cause or causes of the accident in accordance with 30 CFR 50.12.

2. A 104(a) citation was issued to Vermont Quarries Corp. for a violation of 30 CFR 57.16001.

An accident occurred on January 19, 2026, at approximately 10:10 a.m., in the trim saw area. Slabs of marble, weighing approximately 4,500 pounds, were stacked and stored in a manner that created a fall-of-material hazard. The miner working in the area was struck by the falling slab of marble and received crushing injuries. The miner died on April 2, 2026, from complications related to his injuries.

APPENDIX A – Wire Saw



This photograph shows the new concrete pad with metal tracks and bars installed as part of the corrective action to support cut marble slabs.

APPENDIX B – Persons Participating in the Investigation

Vermont Quarries Corp.

Luca Manolini  
Keith Millard  
Ricky Clayton  
Kenny Abbott  
James Heavens

General Manager  
Quarry Manager  
Miners' Representative  
Loader Operator  
Mechanic

Mine Safety and Health Administration

Brandt Berryann  
Andrew Grabo

Supervisory Mine Safety and Health Inspector  
Mine Safety and Health Inspector

APPENDIX C – View of the Accident Scene

