MNM Fatal 2011-02

- Sliding Material Accident
- March 2, 2011 (North Carolina)
- Phosphate Rock Operation
- Contract Superintendent
- 51 years old
- 24 years of experience

Overview

The victim was fatally injured when he was struck by a section of pipe. He was supervising the operation of attempting to join two ends of 22-inch diameter pipe into a pipe fusion machine (machine). Two excavators were being used to position the pipe in the cradle of the machine when the pipe slipped out and struck him.

The accident occurred because contractor management policies, procedures, and controls were inadequate and did not protect persons performing the task of fusing pipe. Four pipe jaws, two inner jaws and two outer jaws, were located on the machine. These jaws would remain open while pipe was positioned in the cradle. The jaws were designed to close and hold the pipe in place while it was \ being fused. A positioning cylinder for one of the outer jaws was defective and removed from the machine eight days prior to the accident. Contractor management was aware of the defect but did not correct it. Since the defect was not corrected, the pipe jaw could not hold the pipe in place and it slipped out of the cradle. A competent person did not examine each working place and promptly initiate appropriate action to correct known conditions that adversely affect safety.


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Root Causes

Root Cause: Contractor management policies, procedures, and controls were inadequate and failed to ensure that proper training was provided to persons to stay clear of the pipe in the machine.

Corrective Action: Contractor policies, procedures, and controls were implemented for moving, fusing, and guiding pipe. The new procedures require all persons to stay 10 feet away from the swing radius of the machine or be protected by substantial barriers. All persons were instructed regarding these procedures.

Root Cause: Contractor policies, procedures, and controls were inadequate and failed to ensure that any defects on machinery that affect safety to be corrected in a timely manner.

Corrective Action: Contractor management established and implemented policies, procedures, and controls that require any defects on machinery that affect safety to be corrected in a timely manner. All persons were instructed regarding these procedures.

Best Practices

- Establish safe work procedures and identify and remove hazards before beginning a task. Follow the equipment manufacturer's procedures for the work being performed to ensure that all hazards have been addressed.
- Train persons to recognize the hazards associated with performing a task.
- Repair broken or damaged equipment immediately.
- Block material against motion to assure energy cannot be released while the task is performed.
- Do not place yourself in a position that will expose you to hazards while performing a task.
- Monitor personnel routinely to determine that safe work procedures are followed.