

MNM Fatal 2013-07

- Powered Haulage Accident
- May 17, 2013 (New Mexico)
- Underground Molybdenum Mine
- Mucker
- 22 years old
- 31 weeks of experience

Overview

The victim was killed when he was pinned between two loaded ore cars. An electric locomotive was pulling a train of 13 cars loaded with ore up a grade when the eleventh car derailed and uncoupled from the tenth car. He was attempting to unhook the safety chain between the two ore cars.

The accident occurred due to management's failure to ensure that established safe procedures were followed while the victim worked between ore cars. He did not notify the locomotive operator that he would be positioned between the two ore cars and he did not block the ore cars against hazardous motion. Additionally, the braking systems on the locomotive were not maintained in functional condition.



Root Causes

Root Cause: Management did not ensure established safe work procedures were being followed while the victim attempted to unhook the safety chain between two ore cars. The locomotive operator was not notified before he went between two ore cars.

Corrective Action: Although they had been trained, management retrained all miners regarding established procedures to be followed when rail cars derail on the track. Miners will not be positioned between rail cars until they notify the locomotive operator of their intentions and he acknowledges their presence.

Root Cause: Management did not ensure established safe work procedures were followed while the victim attempted to unhook the safety chain between two ore cars. The ore cars were not blocked against hazardous motion before the victim went between them.

Corrective Action: Although they had been trained, management retrained all miners regarding established procedures to be followed when rail cars derail on the track. Management instructed miners to block rail haulage equipment against hazardous motion before working on derailed ore cars.

Root Cause: Management did not ensure the braking systems on the locomotive were maintained in functional condition.

Corrective Action: The locomotive was removed from service.

Best Practices

- Establish policies and procedures for conducting specific tasks.
- Before beginning any work, ensure that persons are properly task trained and understand the hazards associated with the work to be performed.
- Maintain communications with all persons performing the task.
- Conduct adequate pre-operational checks and ensure that all braking systems on mobile equipment are functioning properly.
- Do not work or cross between rail cars unless the locomotive is stopped and the operator is notified and acknowledges your presence.
- Never place yourself between rail cars without blocking them to prevent movement.
- Maintain the track and track mounted equipment to prevent derails.