

MNM Fatal 2013-05

- Falling Material Accident
- April 16, 2013 (Louisiana)
- Underground Salt Operation
- Shaftman
- 58 years old
- 32 years of experience

Overview

The victim was seriously injured when a piece of salt fell and struck him. He and two coworkers were replacing a bushing on the side of a skip hoist in the production shaft. The victim was working while standing on a steel beam, outside the handrails of a covered work platform where the coworkers were standing, when the material struck him. He was transported to a hospital where he died on April 17, 2013. The coworkers were also struck by the falling material and received minor injuries.

The accident occurred due to management's failure to ensure ground conditions that created a hazard to persons working in the shaft were taken down before work was permitted. Management also failed to ensure that persons performed the task of replacing the bushing from a substantial platform equipped with a bonnet or equivalent overhead protection.



Root Causes

Root Cause: Management did not ensure ground conditions that created a hazard to persons were taken down before work was permitted in the shaft.

Corrective Actions: The shaft was inspected and scaling was performed before work was resumed.

Root Cause: The victim was not performing work from a substantial platform equipped with a bonnet or equivalent overhead protection.

Corrective Actions: Management established a policy of changing guide ropes and bushings at the surface. This policy eliminates the need for persons to perform this work in the shaft. All shaftmen were trained in this policy. If any work is required in the shaft, the work will be performed from a substantial platform equipped with a bonnet or equivalent overhead protection.

Best Practices

- Establish and discuss safe work procedures. Identify and control all hazards associated with the work to be performed in a shaft with the methods to properly protect persons.
- Task train all persons to recognize all potential hazardous conditions and to understand safe job procedures for elimination of the hazards, such as falling material, before beginning work.
- Examine the shaft and remove loose material prior to commencing work.
- Implement measures to ensure persons are properly positioned and protected from falling material while performing shaft maintenance work.
- Perform shaft maintenance work from a substantial platform with adequate overhead protection.
- Perform maintenance work for skip hoists and other conveyances on the surface whenever possible.
- Monitor personnel routinely to determine that safe work procedures are followed.