

MNM Fatal 2015-4

- Machinery
- January 26, 2015 (Florida)
- Phosphate Rock Mining
- Heavy Equipment Operator
- 57 years old
- 35 years of experience

Overview

William K. Stormant, Heavy Equipment Operator, age 57, was seriously injured on January 26, 2015. Stormant was operating an excavator near a water-filled ditch when the excavator tipped on its side and entered the murky water, trapping him inside the nearly submerged cab. Rescuers removed Stormant from the water-filled cab. Stormant was transported to a hospital where he died later that day.

The accident occurred due to management's failure to ensure that procedures were established to ensure miners could safely prepare a work area in advance of a dragline. Management failed to ensure competent persons were properly conducting workplace examinations. The water-filled ditch was not identified as a hazard after the heavy rainfall and management failed to barricade or place warning signs to warn employees of hazards, such as the water-filled ditch, that were not immediately obvious to miners.



01/27/2015

Root Causes

- **Root Cause:** Management failed to establish policies and procedures to ensure competent persons were properly conducting workplace examinations so miners could safely prepare a work area in advance of a dragline. Stormant was operating an excavator near a water-filled ditch that was not identified as a hazard after the heavy rainfall three days prior to the accident.
- **Corrective Action:** Management established policies and procedures to ensure that competent persons conduct workplace examinations before persons on the dragline support crew conduct any work. Training on the new policies and procedures was provided for all competent persons to conduct workplace examinations and to take corrective actions if needed.

Root Causes (cont.)

- **Root Cause:** Management failed to establish policies and procedures to ensure that barricades or warning signs were placed to warn employees of hazards, such as the water-filled ditch, that are not immediately obvious to miners.
- **Corrective Action:** Management established policies and procedures to ensure that barricades or warning signs are placed to warn employees of hazards, such as the water-filled ditch, that are not immediately obvious to miners. All miners were trained regarding these policies and procedures.

Best Practices

- Task train all persons to recognize all potential hazardous conditions and safe job procedures to identify and eliminate all hazards before beginning work, specifically the limited visibility of large equipment.
- Discuss safe work procedures before beginning work. Identify and control all hazards associated with the work to be performed and the methods to properly protect miners.
- Provide traffic patterns and roads that minimize the danger of machines traveling near bodies of water.
- Conduct examinations of travelways to evaluate hazards.
- Install barriers, markers, or other warning devices to aid equipment operators where travelways are not recognizable or hazards are not apparent. Limit travel of mobile equipment and inform mobile equipment operators of hazards.
- Do not travel into areas where ground conditions can't be verified. If necessary, use the bucket of the machine to probe the travel/work area to check the ground conditions.