

## **FATAL ALERT**

**September 20, 2006**

A highly educated/trained State government Consumer Specialist employee was assisting a coworker at a customer's facility in preparation for calibrating a bin scale at a feed and fertilizer facility. The customer had an auger over the blending bin that was going to be calibrated. The customer employee told the government employees that the tractor attached to the auger was broken and was not running. The deceased climbed the bin and attempted to lift the auger out of the bin while the other government employee was to tow the tractor that was attached to the auger. The deceased lifted the auger out of the inside of the bin and was unaware that he had set the auger down on a pipe that was located on the top of the bin. When the other employee pulled the tractor and auger away from the bin, the bin was pulled over and the deceased fell between the auger and the bin and was fatally crushed.

### **Significant Factors:**

- The employer had not assessed employees' work sites/areas for safety hazards prior to employees' exposure.
- No fall protection was being used or was onsite while employees were working on the bin the day of the accident.
- The employer had not established written policies and procedures relating to the use of personal protective equipment or fall protection.
- There was no fall protection training provided to the employees specific to this type of work.
- Employer relied on the customer to provide any needed personal protective equipment.
- Deceased was not aware that he had lowered the auger on a small piece of pipe on top of the blending/mixing bin.
- Employees on the ground were not aware of conditions on top of the blending/mixing bin (auger over the top of piece of pipe) when they pulled the tractor and auger away from the bin.

### **Recommendations:**

- Brief all department employees on the facts and circumstances of this fatal mishap.
- Management establish procedures to ensure that employees are provided proper fall protection at work sites and that all potentially hazardous situations are evaluated/assessed prior to employees being exposed to a hazardous situation.
- Ensure all employees understand the OSHA rules relating to the use of personal protective equipment and fall protection through a written certification process.
- Enforce the OSHA rules, document all training accomplished, document all non-compliance, and retrain as required.
- State employees should not subject themselves to potentially hazardous situations; they should let the customer handle their own equipment.