

FATAL ALERT

On November 8, 2013, three employees were in the process of un-loading drill pipe from a railcar and moving them to a pipe yard. One employee was operating a fork lift, one employee was working on top of the stacked and bundled drill pipe cutting straps and removing wood spacers, and one employee was working on the ground removing debris, cut straps and wood spacers from in front of the railcar to keep the area clear for the forklift.

At the time of the incident the employee in the process of clearing the area directly in front of the railcar and below the loaded drill pipe was removing the debris generated during the unloading process, straps and wood spacers was stuck by a pipe casing and killed, when the employee on top of the piping casing cut the last strap from the top stack, the top outside drill pipe fell off of the stack and struck the worker who was cleaning up the debris on the head and shoulders.

Information gathered from interviews indicated that the employee on top of the stack and the victim had lost eye and voice contact as the last strap was cut. After the pipe fell, the employee on top yelled for the victim but received no response.

Significant Factors:

- Employees performing the task of unloading the railcar of drill pipe were not adequately trained.
- A safe zone was not established for workers on the ground.
- Employees were working at two different levels and opposite end of the railroad car.
- Employee did not ensure the load was stable before cutting straps.
- There was not fall protection being used while working above 4 feet on the railcar.
- Employee had worked for the company for 1 ½ years performing the same job and were not recognizing the hazards of falling or falling objects.

Recommendations:

- Brief all employees on the facts and circumstances of this fatal incident.
- Establish a safety program, relating to the activities of unloading railcars and train all employees to recognize related hazards in their work places relating to falling hazards and falling object hazards.
- Ensure all personnel are trained in and practice fall protection.
- Ensure all personnel are trained in and practice a “Walk around Program” developed for observing the condition of loads on railroad cars.
- Complete a hazards assessment for like activities.