

FATALGRAM

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Date of Accident: February 18, 2008

General

On February 18, 2008, a truck driver was struck-by a section of 40 foot long pipe that rolled off of a flatbed trailer during load operations. The victim was attempting to secure a tier, consisting of eight sections of pipe, onto the flat-bed trailer of a semi truck and trailer rig when he was fatally crushed.

Description of Incident: The victim was in the process of securing a layer (tier) composed of eight, 40-foot long sections of 10.75 inch diameter steel pipe when the accident occurred. Each pipe section weighs approximately 1800 pounds and rests on wood dunnage, which is placed between each tier. When fully loaded the flatbed trailer would have three tiers of pipe containing eight sections of pipe and a fourth, or top tier, comprised of two lengths of pipe. The total number of pipe in this load would be 26 sections.

Dunnage between each tier of horizontal pipe is supposed to have wood "chocks" nailed in place at the outside ends to prevent pipe sections from rolling off. In addition, a safety chain and chain binder secures the eight pipe sections from movement during the loading operation. The wood chocks were missing from the ends of the dunnage under the third tier of pipe, which had just been placed onto the flatbed trailer by a forklift.

The victim had opened the chain binder, which secured the row of eight pipe sections together and was in the process of removing the safety chain by pulling it to him when the outside pipe section rolled off and struck him. It is not known why the victim removed this safety chain and binder prior to securing this third tier of pipe with synthetic load wrappers. Each of the three tiers of eight pipe sections was held by a safety chain and binder to prevent the pipe sections from rolling during the loading process.

ACCIDENT PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Ensure materials are properly stored, stacked, and secured throughout the loading operation.
- Ensure that drivers are trained in proper safety procedures for the type of material being loaded onto flatbed trailers.
- Ensure that written safety procedures and policies are followed.
- Ensure that drivers are provided with proper PPE including hard hats for head protection.

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An employer should have a written safety program which includes enforcement and discipline procedures to ensure that employees follow the employer's safety requirements. The employer should take steps to discover employee violations and document disciplinary action taken.

Implement an ongoing evaluation to identify changes in procedures regarding potential threats or acts of violence in the workplace.