

FATALGRAM

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Date of Accident: May 5, 2005

Seafood Processing

A seafood processing worker was crushed between a freezer cart and a structural member of the building. The worker was attempting to dislodge a cart that was stuck in the blast freezer's mechanical delivery system.

Description of Accident: The victim was removing trays from carts coming out of the blast freezer. The carts, weighing approximately one thousand (1000) pounds, are pushed through the freezer by mechanical rams. There are five lanes of ten to twelve carts per lane. An operator controls the mechanical rams for each lane.

The employee unloading carts noticed a stalled cart in lane 5. The employee stepped into a space between two carts in lane 4 to attempt to dislodge the cart in lane 5. As the victim leaned into lane 5, the ram in lane 4 activated pushing the series of carts through, pinning the victim between a structural steel member and a loaded cart. The victim expired as a result from crushing injuries.

ACCIDENT PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS:

Ensure that there is an effective written lock out/tag out (LO/TO) program for your establishment to include:

- Policies/procedures for all mechanical problems, interruptions or emergency stops, regardless of frequency or likelihood of occurrence.
- Train all employees in the LO/TO program, policies and procedures, regardless of job duty or assignment.
- Identify and clearly mark emergency shut off devices; test these devices regularly.
- Conduct thorough hazard assessments of your establishment
 - Breakdown tasks
 - Identify the steps within each task
 - Involve your employees
 - Ask "What if...?"
 - Re-evaluate your establishment regularly
- Implement a procedure to identify newly discovered problems or changes in procedure for evaluation of potential hazards/risks.
- 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.