

FATALGRAM 14-01

Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development
Division of Labor & Safety Standards
Occupational Safety & Health



Date of incident: February 7, 2014

Industry: Transportation

Location: MP 241 Dalton Hwy.

Summary: On February 7, 2014, at the Department of Transportation Chandalar Station a worker suffered a fatal fall from equipment that resulted in his death. This happened while the victim, a grader operator, was preparing for his task that morning. There was no direct witness to the fall event. However, he was assisted for several hours before he succumbed to his injuries at the work site.

Description of Accident: During the morning, the operator was assigned to his 16G motor grader to conduct road maintenance operations on the hill at Antigon Pass. The grader was inside the shop and the operator had to retrieve the machine's air filter and install it back on the machine outside the cab at the engine side compartment. It was seen that he had nearly completed that task and at some point while fastening the last securing straps on the engine compartment, he slipped, tripped, or otherwise fell off the outside chain case walking deck. Shortly after the fall, a witness saw him leaning on the grader tire and he indicated to the witness he had fallen off the grader. The injury was reported to staff at the pump station and troopers in Coldfoot were called for assistance. After about 1 hour and 45 minutes in the shop, the worker succumbed to his injury. By-standers provided CPR but were not able to revive him. An autopsy revealed a punctured lung from a rib injured in a fall.

Accident Prevention Recommendations:

- Assure a viable incident and medical command response plan for remote locations is vetted and available.
- Assure all equipment has walking decks maintained and all equipment grab bars are in place.
- Minimize worker exposure to raised positions whenever possible such as minimizing the air filter frequent exchange patterns.