



PUNCH PRESSES "SHOOT" TWO WORKERS

The California FACE Program has been investigating workplace deaths since 1992. The following two cases describe workers killed while working with punch presses.

A PRESS OPERATOR

A punch press operator died while punching a piece of metal. The setscrews holding the die to the press were stripped. This let the die shift, and the punch and die became misaligned. This caused the machine to make a noise during a cycle. The operator backed off the machine, but then he stepped on the pedal that started a new cycle.

The punch struck the side of the die. This caused a small piece of metal to break off of the punch, and shoot at high speeds into the operator's stomach. There was no record of when the machine last received maintenance, or of what training the operator had received.

A MAINTENANCE REPAIRMAN

A maintenance repairman died while repairing a punch press. The repairman had been called to fix the machine after a piece of metal had jammed in the punch assembly. Company policy directed that jams be fixed by first cutting off the punch and die and then removing the jammed piece of metal. The repairman removed the jam with a crow bar and then removed a cover plate. The cover plate helped keep the punch and die aligned.

The machine then cycled. When the punch started down it was not aligned with the die. The edge of the punch struck the die. This caused a small piece of metal to break off of the punch, and shoot into the operator's chest.

The operator did not lock, block, and tagout the machine. There was no record that verified the effectiveness of the victim's training.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Workers should:

- ▶ Never operate punch presses if the die and punch are not aligned.
- ▶ Follow documented company policies and procedures.

Employers should:

- ▶ Make sure that operators receive thorough, documented training. Prove that training is effective through employee testing.
- ▶ Maintain punch presses on a regular basis. Keep records of that maintenance.
- ▶ Install shields to protect punch press workers when metal pieces fly toward the worker.

Further information on this subject may be obtained at the following websites:

www.dir.ca.gov/samples/search/query.htm
 (Title 8 section 4184-4216), and www.osha-slc.gov/Publications/Mach_SafeGuard/
 (Concepts and Techniques of Machine Safeguarding)

References:

Mechanical Power Presses—Safety Requirements for Construction, Care, and Use, ANSI B11.1-1998
Hydraulic Power Presses—Safety Requirements for Construction, Care, and Use, ANSI B11.2-1995 (R2000)

For complete fatality reports of these or other cases, and information on the **California Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program**, contact the California Department of Health Services, Occupational Health Branch, FACE Program, 850 Marina Bay Parkway, Bldg P, 3rd Floor, Richmond, CA 94804, or visit our website at www.dhs.ca.gov/ohb/ohsep/face.

PLEASE POST

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FACE stands for "Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation." The purpose of the **FACE** Program is to find problems that may cause work-related deaths so that employers and employees can help prevent them. **FACE** is a public health program run by the California Department of Health Services, Occupational Health Branch and funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

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