

New Mexico Occupational Safety & Health

FATAL FACTS



No. 8775-001

Accident Type:	Struck By
Number of Fatalities:	2
Weather Conditions:	Clear
Type of Operation:	Earth boring
Size of Work Crew:	8
Competent Safety Monitor on Site:	No
Safety and Health Program in Effect:	No
Was the Worksite Inspected Regularly:	No
Training and Education Provided:	Yes (OJT)
Employees Job Titles:	Laborers
Age & Gender:	34-M, 36-M
Experience at this Type of Work:	1 day
Time on Project:	5 hours



BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

A crew of 8 employees was using a horizontal boring machine to bore underneath a roadway. Upon completion of the bore the crew was removing the bore drill stem a section at a time. One pipe wrench was used to secure one side of the joint against the frame of the boring machine while another wrench was used in conjunction with a cheater bar to "break" the joint. Power was restored to the drill stem while pipe wrenches were still attached. The force on the pipe wrench and cheater bar was enough to lift and throw one employee up and over onto the embankment, then continue around and hit the second employee on the head. Both were fatally injured.

INSPECTION RESULTS

As the result of its investigation, NM OSHA issued a citation for one serious violation of its construction standards.

ACCIDENT PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Employers must instruct each employee in the recognition and avoidance of unsafe condition(s) and the regulation(s) applicable to his work environment to control or eliminate any hazard(s) or other exposure to illness or injury. **29 CFR 1926.21(b)(2)**
2. Develop and implement a written Health and Safety Program, include as part of a safety and health program regular training to employees on proper hand tool usage with and around boring operations as well as having heavy equipment operators receive refresher training on boring operations.

NOTE: The case described here was selected as being representative of fatalities caused by improper work practices. No special emphasis or priority is implied nor is the case necessarily a recent occurrence. The legal aspects of the incident have been resolved, and the case is now closed.