

Investigation Report
Worker Fatally Injured when Crushed between Equipment
November 3, 2015

The contents of this report

This document reports an Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) investigation of a fatal accident in November 2015. It begins with a short summary of what happened. The rest of the report covers this same information in greater detail.

Incident summary

A worker was preparing a two wheel portable compressor unit for transportation to a worksite for a client when the worker was fatally injured by being pinned between the compressor unit and a parked work vehicle.

Background information

Employer – Benoit Oilfield Construction (1997) Ltd.

Benoit Oilfield Construction (1997) Ltd. (Benoit Oilfield) was an oilfield facility and pipeline construction company operating in Chauvin and Provost, Alberta. Benoit Oilfield specialized in pipeline and plant construction, oilfield maintenance, welding and fabrication, pump jack installations, tank moving, excavation and reclamation services. Benoit Oilfield had been operating since 1976 and under its current ownership structure since 1990. During peak periods of operation, Benoit Oilfield employed a workforce of approximately 90 to 120 workers. On the date of the incident, Benoit Oilfield employed approximately 70 individuals.

Worker 1 (fatally injured) was a tool and inventory controller who had approximately 12 years of experience as an inventory worker, shipper/receiver and salesman. The controller was employed with Benoit Oilfield for approximately 18 months at the time of incident.

Worker 2 was a labourer and heavy duty mechanic apprentice who had approximately three years of experience with Benoit Oilfield in the oil and gas industry.

Equipment and materials

The Incident site

At the time of the incident, Benoit Oilfield was renting a privately owned workshop for equipment and indoor storage purposes. This workshop, referred to as “Lyles shop”, was located 1.2 kilometres (km) north of Chauvin, Alberta (Figure 1). The workshop was a metal quonset which sat on a concrete pad with a dirt approach.

Benoit Oilfield had a main office located in Chauvin for administrative duties, mechanical operations and crew dispatch. A welding shop was also nearby which provided welding, fabrication and pressure testing services.



Figure 1: Lyles shop

Work Vehicle

The vehicle was a 2007 Chevrolet Silverado 2500HD pickup truck (unit #151) which was parked 3.5 metres (m) outside the workshop on gravel (Figure 2).



Figure 2: The incident site.

A: Unit #151

B: Compressor unit

C: Point of contact

Compressor

The Sullivan-Palatek portable air compressor unit consisted of the air compressor and was attached to a single axle trailer (Figure 2B). The compressor unit measured 2.3 m long and 1.4 m wide and weighed 721 kilograms (kg).

Sequence of events

On November 03, 2015, worker 1 was dispatched by the employer to Lyles shop located 5 km north of the main office of Benoit Oilfield located in Chauvin, Alberta. Worker 1 was directed to retrieve a 721 kg two wheel portable compressor unit for use by a client at a different jobsite. Worker 1 was instructed to prepare and hitch up the compressor unit in order to transport it back to the main office where further parts and equipment were to be included with the client's order.

Worker 1 backed unit #151 into the entrance of the workshop and parked it on the gravel approach 3.5 m away from the main operating doors (Figure 2A). The compressor unit was located slightly higher and upslope on a concrete pad within the workshop (Figure 2B).

Worker 1 manually pulled the compressor unit from its stored location inside the workshop to a

position behind unit #151 (Figure 2C). In the process, the tires of the compressor unit moved from the concrete pad and dropped 10 centimetres (cm) from the concrete base at a slope of 36° (Figure 3B). As the compressor unit moved, the hitch struck worker 1 in the midsection and pinned worker 1 against the tailgate and the bumper of unit #151 where it had been parked (Figure 4A).



Figure 3: The transition area between the concrete floor of the workshop and the gravel approach.

A: Horizontal reference point.

B. 36° slope measured from horizontal reference point.

Shortly after worker 1 left the main office, worker 2 was dispatched to Lyles shop in order to provide assistance.

Worker 2 responded to the site and found worker 1 in a pinned position between the tailgate and the bumper of unit #151 and the hitch on the compressor unit.



Figure 4: Tailgate of unit #151 and hitch of the compressor unit.

A : Contact point of where worker was pinned by hitch.

An ambulance from Provost, Alberta attended the scene and transported worker 1 to the Wainwright Health Centre and Auxiliary Hospital located in Wainwright, Alberta where worker 1 was pronounced deceased.

Completion

A review for enforcement action was completed on May 17, 2016, and it was determined that prosecution or an administrative penalty were not appropriate based on the circumstances surrounding this incident.

This file was closed on October 21, 2016.

Final Report

Signatures

ORIGINAL REPORT SIGNED

January 20, 2017

Lead Investigator

Date

ORIGINAL REPORT SIGNED

January 20, 2017

Manager

Date

ORIGINAL REPORT SIGNED

January 23, 2017

Director

Date