Asphalt Plant Trainee Crushed In Conveyor

Trevor* was 24 years old when he died in an unguarded conveyor at an asphalt plant, where investigators concluded that several safety procedures could have prevented his death.

WHAT HAPPENED

Trevor was a trainee who, along with a co-worker, was instructed to assist in the recalibration of a conveyor by clearing it of any remaining asphalt and running aggregate through it. While the conveyor was operating, Trevor climbed onto a support beam (directly above an unguarded opening of the conveyor) to operate a handle controlling a gate in the conveyor chute.

The co-worker told Trevor to “get down from there,” but the young man continued to operate the handle. He lost his balance and fell feet first into the conveyor. The co-worker grabbed Trevor’s arm but could not prevent him from being dragged into a narrow aperature of the conveyor and being crushed.

WORKERS TAKE HEED

Employees should follow these recommendations to prevent similar deaths when working around conveyors and other machines:

- Don’t work with machinery that has exposed moving parts. Report lack of guarding to your supervisor.
- Make sure you know where all stop buttons are located so you can deactivate a machine quickly.
- Do not climb or stand on machinery. Use elevated work platforms to activate out-of-reach handles or switches.
- Ensure you have been trained to identify and control the hazards associated with your job, and ask that a job safety analysis be conducted before you begin a hazardous task.
- Regularly inspect machinery before each use. You might find a problem that could lead to a serious injury

** The names aren’t real, but the incidents are. These accounts are based on actual fatality investigations.*