Fourteen-Year-Old Laborer Crushed by Five-Ton Beam

Fourteen-Year-Old Laborer Crushed by Five-Ton Beam

A 14-year-old boy, employed as a laborer, was crushed by a five-ton beam that fell on him while he was working beneath a house that had been moved onto a vacant lot several months earlier. The house was being raised on temporary supports and cross beams until the new foundation could be built. The beams, one of which was placed under the house, were being used to lift the structure. Using an accepted industry technique, the workers were lifting the beam with an airbag. The worker was kneeling on the ground beside the beam when it suddenly rolled off the airbag, crushing him.

There were a number of recommendations made as a result of this accident. First is the requirement that a comprehensive health and safety plan be prepared, and that this plan should include a job hazard analysis. The analysis should be used for developing safe work procedures and for training employees. Another recommendation was that prior to any work being conducted, a site inspection should be performed to identify and correct any potential hazards in or near the worksite. Finally, a recommendation was made that parents be made aware of the work that their underage children will be required to perform, as children under 16 are not allowed to perform the types of jobs or work in the sort of environment described in this incident.

Source: Alaska Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program, Case Report 01AK027