Hand Protection – Handle with Care Fatality File

Worker loses four-fingers after hand caught in unguarded machine at Baldwin, Illinois, power generation plant

BALDWIN, Ill. – A 46-year-old worker suffered the amputation of four fingers on his right hand when a feed machine cycled as he reached inside an access door to assist another employee with maintenance. Federal safety inspectors found his employer, Dynegy Midwest Generation LLC, failed to power down the machinery prior to employees servicing the machine.

The U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration issued one willful and seven serious citations to the Baldwin electrical power generation plant on June 9, after its investigation of the Dec. 7, 2015, injury. OSHA has proposed penalties of $92,000. During the investigation, OSHA found that multi-finger amputations also occurred on this same machine.

“Employees should never reach into operating machines to conduct service or maintenance. This was a preventable incident that has severely impacted this employee’s life and ability to earn a living,” said Aaron Priddy, area director of OSHA’s Fairview Heights office. “OSHA’s revised guidelines for the reporting of amputation injuries have led to greater intervention to improve safety. This company needs to take immediate action to fix safety issues at its facilities to protect employees from additional injuries.”

OSHA also found the company failed to:

- Provide hand protection for employees exposed to lime.

- Place caution signs on access doors of machinery to warn employees of amputation hazards.
- Conduct hazard assessments to determine the need for personal protective equipment.
- Conduct periodic inspections of energy control procedures at least annually.