Overhead Shop Crane Safety Fatality File

A Hispanic Laborer Operating an Overhead Crane Died When He was Crushed Between Two Steel Frames When the Rigging Failed

A 36-year-old Hispanic laborer who was operating an overhead crane in a steel fabrication shop died when he was crushed between two steel frames. The victim was using a chain sling attached to the hook of an overhead crane and configured into a single choker hitch to pick up and turn over the steel frame that was lying horizontally on two saw horses. The hook on the sling did not have a safety latch. The victim was standing between the load and another steel frame that was leaning vertically against the shop platform when the hook disconnected and the vertical frame fell toward the victim, trapping him between the two steel frames. The victim was trained by shop supervisors on the specifics of his job. The riggers in this company were not required to be certified. The CA/FACE investigator determined that, in order to prevent future occurrences, employers, as part of their Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP), should:

- Ensure employees do not place any part of their bodies into areas where they might become trapped when operating an overhead crane.
- Ensure that the tools and equipment used in the shop are periodically inspected for defects and safety compliance and are repaired or replaced as needed.
- Ensure employees who use cranes to lift loads of varying size and complexity are certified in rigging.