

SAFETY NOTES

Department of Consumer & Business Services
Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division
Salem, OR 97301-3882

Fatality Report

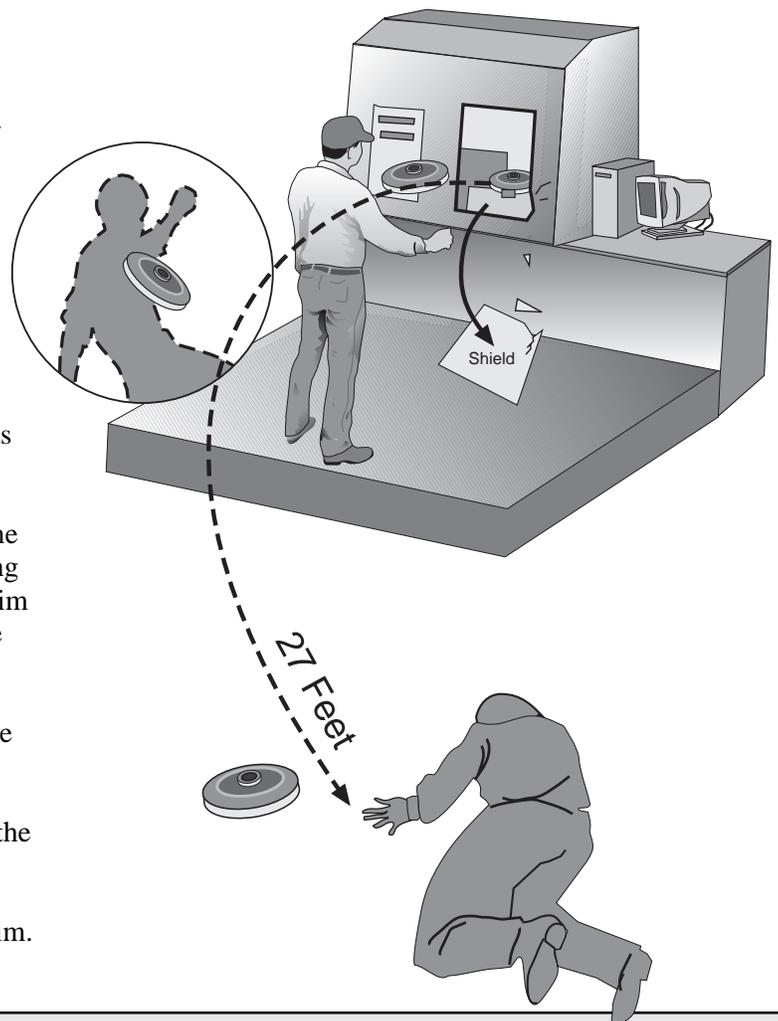
Accident type Struck by
Industry Manufacturing
Employee job title Machinist trainee

Description of accident

The victim was a machinist for a company engaged in the manufacture and distribution of industrial pumps and pumping equipment. The company was in the process of machining bronze pump impellers (rotors) to specifications.

At the time of the accident, the victim had been in training on the vertical lathe for about two weeks. The impeller he was machining was approximately 15 inches in diameter and weighed about 40 pounds. He was standing in front of the viewing window (a Lexan shield) when the impeller dislodged from the chuck jaws and struck the corner of the shield. The impact damaged the shield, allowing the impeller to exit the lathe and strike the victim in the chest. The force of the blow knocked the victim approximately 27 feet, off the work platform and onto a concrete floor.

The leadworker, who had been instructing the victim just minutes before the accident, was in the office on a telephone call when he heard a loud noise. He ran to the work area and found the victim lying on the floor. Fire department personnel responded within a few minutes to the 911 call, but were unable to revive the victim.



Investigation findings

The impeller involved in the accident was smaller in diameter and had a higher hub than other impellers being machined. The employer did not have a quality-control system in place to ensure the impellers were cast within allowable tolerances. Measurements taken indicated the chuck jaws on the lathe were not at optimum extension to secure the odd-sized impeller properly while it was being machined. Two prior incidents, where parts were ejected from the chuck jaws but contained inside the metal lathe, were not investigated to determine the cause of the problem or address possible operator error, or to prevent recurrence of the same type of incident.

When interviewed, employees stated that they had not reviewed the machine's operating manual. The employer did not provide adequate instruction and supervision of the victim.

Applicable standards

ORS 654.010

OAR 437-001-0760(1)(a)