

A fall from a high pipe-carrying truck, severe head trauma due to collision with hard-frozen snow.

Incident Summary

Unloading of pipes from railroad open-top wagons was performed at a railroad station. During unloading the foreman left the site for operational reasons, but at first he gave instruction to the crew chief to continue the process. One pair of riggers was hooking the pipe directly in the wagon, another pair of riggers was loading the pipes to the pipe trucks and coupling/uncoupling vehicles in the train. The crew chief was supervising the process. After the truck was filled with pipes the rigger has installed the ladder, by the request of the warehouse worker, on the surface of pipe, laying in the truck, and started to support the ladder. The warehouse worker didn't ask permission of the crew chief and didn't inform the truck driver, but she has climbed the ladder on 1.8-meter height to make a picture of pipe numbers. At the same time the truck driver, having the signal from the rigger, has started motion, but he didn't check that there are no people nearby. As a result, the ladder has fallen from the pipe body, the warehouse worker has fallen to the ground and hit her head on the packed snow. The warehouse worker was fatally injured.

Causes

Unsatisfactory organization of works (works were performed in absence of the person responsible for safety operation).

The pipe truck driver has failed to follow the safety rules for vehicle operation (before the train starting the driver is obliged to check that there are no people on the truck platform or nearby).

The warehouse worker has failed to follow the labour and discipline regulations (it's prohibited to come near to the vehicle after the loading/unloading operation were completed without informing the driver or the person responsible for safety operation).

Prevention Measures

Inform the employees about the results of the incident investigation.

In order to prevent such accidents in future organize additional safety briefings and develop special instructions for all employees.

Department Heads responsible for safety operation should conduct the unscheduled safety briefing for employees engaged in loading/unloading and warehouse operations, based on the details of the incident investigation, and after they should put signature in the workplace briefing's log book.

The foreman, the driver and the rigger should be subject to disciplinary action for the violation of the health and safety requirements.

Department Heads should provide more strict control over the organization and performance of loading/unloading and warehouse operations in compliance with safety requirements.