



# Alaska FACE Facts

Occupational Injury Prevention Program  
Section of Epidemiology  
Division of Public Health  
Department of Health and Social Services

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## Laborer dies from injuries when he was struck by a suspended overhaul ball

**Incident:** A 29-year-old male laborer was killed when a suspended 350-pound overhaul ball was severed from a cable on a mobile crane and struck his head. The victim was a sheet metal worker/welder at a remote construction site. During off-duty hours, he had acquired additional employment with a second construction company as a temporary laborer to assist in the relocation of several trailers. The mobile crane in the incident was equipped with two hoists. Each hoist was attached to a lift assembly, either a hook block (on the main hoist assemblage) or an overhaul ball (on the auxiliary hoist assemblage). After repositioning the crane to lift the next trailer, the crane operator rotated the boom and lowered the hook block so the victim could attach the rigging. Seeing the block was approximately a half-foot short of position, the operator extended the boom to adjust the block position. Anti-two-blocking devices were attached but not functional. During this procedure, the overhaul ball came into contact with the boom nose and the cable severed. The victim was struck on the head by the ball.

### **Recommendations:**

Based on the findings of the investigation, to prevent similar occurrences, employers should:

- Ensure all employees are capable of recognizing worksite hazards and their avoidance. Workers should be capable of recognizing the potential of all suspended materials including any rigging and maintain a safe distance and orientation to avoid their hazard.
- Ensure equipment operators follow manufacturer guidelines for the safe operation of equipment. Whenever anti-two-blocking devices are not present or not functioning, hoist cables should be let out to prevent contact with the boom nose when extending or lowering the boom.

- Ensure the use of written, pre-start inspection checklists and incorporate all retrofit safety devices and aids into the checklist.
- Ensure the completion of all periodic equipment inspections by a qualified person and communicate recommendations and findings to the equipment operators.

The Alaska Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) program is administered by the Occupational Injury Prevention Program (OIPP), Section of Epidemiology, Department of Health and Social Services under a cooperative agreement with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. The purpose of FACE is to identify conditions that increase the possibility of work-related fatal injury and provide recommendations for countermeasures that can be developed and implemented by the employer.

**For more information or  
a copy of this FACE report, contact the  
Occupational Injury Prevention Office  
(907) 269-8000  
or visit our website**

<http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/programs/injury>

