Untrained Worker Killed By Spinning Wrench



Verbal instructions on how to perform a task aren’t worth much if the worker isn’t asked to demonstrate the task and then be supervised doing it until competency is assured.

Unfortunately, that didn’t happen and a worker died as a result. The worker was changing a saver sub nut (a large bolt used to hold a drilling bit in place) on a large portable underground drilling unit at an Ontario mine when a large wrench spun off the drill and struck him in the head. He died in hospital.

An Ontario Ministry of Labour investigation into the fatality found that the victim had sought information on how to remove the saver sub nut from a mechanic, since workers were having trouble doing so. The method suggested by the mechanic was not properly followed and there was no supervision at the time of the incident.

The Ontario Court of Justice found Boart Longyear Inc. of North Bay, ON, guilty of failing to provide adequate supervision to workers at Kidd Creek Mine. The company was also found guilty of failing to provide proper information and instruction to the deceased worker on the safe removal of the saver sub nut from the drill unit.

Boart Longyear Inc. was fined $150,000, plus a 25 percent victim fine surcharge. Money from that fund goes to victims of crime.