



## PUNCH PRESSES "SHOOT" TWO WORKERS

The California Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) program has been investigating work-related deaths since 1992. The goal of the FACE program is to prevent these deaths by informing workers and managers of worksite hazards and how to avoid them. The two incidents below involve workers who died while they were working with punch presses.

### A PRESS OPERATOR

A 39-year-old machine operator, John L.\*, died while punching a piece of metal. The setscrews holding the die to the press were stripped. This let the die shift, and the punch and die became misaligned. This caused the machine to make a noise during a cycle. John backed off the machine, but then he stepped on the pedal that started a new cycle.

The punch struck the side of the die. This caused a small piece of metal to break off of the punch, and shoot at high speeds into John's stomach. There was no record of when the machine last received maintenance, or of what training John had received.

### A MAINTENANCE REPAIRMAN

A 44-year-old maintenance repairman, Carlo M.\*, died while repairing a punch press. Carlo had been called to fix the machine after a piece of metal had jammed in the punch assembly. Company policy directed that jams be fixed by first cutting off the punch and die and then removing the jammed piece of metal. Carlo removed the jam with a crowbar and then removed a cover plate. The cover plate helped keep the punch and die aligned.

The machine then cycled. When the punch started down it was not aligned with the die. The edge of the punch struck the die. This caused a small piece of metal to break off of the punch, and shoot into Carlo's chest. Carlo did not lock, block, and tagout the machine. There was no record that verified the effectiveness of his training.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Workers should:

- ▶ Never operate punch presses if the die and punch are not aligned.
- ▶ Follow documented company policies and procedures.

#### Employers should:

- ▶ Make sure that operators receive thorough, documented training. Prove that training is effective through employee testing.
- ▶ Maintain punch presses on a regular basis. Keep records of that maintenance.
- ▶ Install shields to protect punch press workers when metal pieces fly toward the worker.

For complete fatality reports of these (00CA008 & 00CA009), or other cases, and additional information on the California FACE program, please contact:

California Department of Public Health  
Occupational Health Branch (OHB), FACE Program  
850 Marina Bay Parkway, Building P, 3rd Floor, Richmond, CA 94804  
(510) 620-5757

[www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/ohb-face](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/ohb-face)

CA Relay Service: 711 or (800) 735-2929 (hearing/speech impaired)

To obtain a copy of this document in an alternate format, please contact OHB at (510) 620-5757. Allow at least 10 days to coordinate alternate format services.

\* Not the victim's real name

# PLEASE POST

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Occupational Health Branch, FACE Program  
850 Marina Bay Parkway, Building P, 3rd Floor  
Richmond, CA 94804



**FACE stands for "Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation."** The purpose of the **FACE** program is to identify hazards that may cause work-related deaths so that employers and employees can help prevent them.

**FACE** is a program run by the Occupational Health Branch within the California Department of Public Health, and funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor  
State of California  
Kimberly Belshé, Secretary  
Health and Human Services Agency  
Mark B. Horton, Director  
Department of Public Health  
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