



Alaska Face Facts

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

October 2000

Deckhand killed when struck by collapsed boom

SUMMARY

On June 16, 1999, a 32-year-old male deckhand (the victim) was injured when a boom on a fishing vessel collapsed. The victim and a coworker were standing under the boom, pulling net through a power block to bring a load of salmon on board. A wire cable, used to raise and lower the boom, snapped. The boom collapsed and knocked both men down. The power block struck the victim. The vessel captain and a skiff tender, who was in the skiff at the time of the incident, helped free the men and check their injuries. The captain went into the wheelhouse to radio for help, leaving the skiff tender to monitor the injured men. While on the radio, the skiff tender called to the captain that the victim had stopped breathing. CPR was started. Minutes later, several people from a nearby hatchery and another fishing vessel arrived and assisted with CPR.

Two United States Coast Guard helicopters were dispatched, arriving 30 to 40 minutes after the incident. The coworker was hoisted from the vessel and transported to a medical facility. The victim, still receiving CPR, was transferred to the beach and then airlifted to the medical facility. He was later transported to a larger medical center where he died from his injuries 11 days later.

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

- **Ensure that rigging is inspected regularly for wear and wire rope is replaced as needed and as recommended by the manufacturer;**

- **Ensure that at least two blocks are used in the boom rigging arrangement to improve weight distribution;**
- **Ensure that the rigging arrangement avoids obstacles and uses appropriately sized sheaves.**

In addition, vessel owners should

- **Consider the use of backup safety systems to rigging arrangements.**



**FACE reports can be viewed on the
Occupational Injury Prevention Program
website**

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

or

**Call or fax your request to:
907-269-8000 (phone) 907-562-7802 (fax)**