

OSHA fines Mt. Bachelor \$15,700 in lift-line accident

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Mt. Bachelor, Inc. has been fined \$15,700 for five violations that Oregon OSHA (Occupational Safety & Health Administration) categorized as "serious", in connection with an accident that injured four employees as they were rigging a lift-cable on October 20 of last year.

While Kevin Weeks, OSHA's public information officer, said he has yet to see a written appeals request from Mt. Bachelor, the company has reportedly indicated that it plans on appealing three of the five allegations (items 1, 2, and 3 listed below). "The appeal rights window is open until March 20," Weeks said.

OSHA issued the following citations, with their findings noted:

Citation 1, item 1 - \$5,000 fine

The employer did, not see that workers were properly supervised in the safe operation of any machinery, tools, equipment, process, or practice which they were authorized to use or apply:

a) Supervisors on site directed and allowed employees to do a shortening splice of a lift line in an unsafe manner, resulting in serious injuries to employees.

Citation 1, item 2 - \$5,000 fine

The employer did not take all reasonable means to require employees to use all means and methods including, but not limited to, ladders, scaffolds, guardrails, machine guards, safety belts and lifelines, that were necessary to safely accomplish all work where employees were exposed to a hazard: not follow the manufacturer's guidelines and their own procedures to rig lift lines for

a) The employer did not follow the manufacturer's guidelines and their own procedures to rig lift lines for shortening.

Citation 1, item 3 - \$5,000 fine

All places of employment were not inspected by qualified persons as often as the type of operation or the character of the equipment required, and/or defective equipment or unsafe conditions found by these inspections were not replaced or repaired or remedied promptly:

1) Superior BC-48 plate clamps have evidence of modifications and damage from previous use.

2) Lift line rigging equipment is inspected by employees who are not qualified, trained, or knowledgeable in quality control requirements.

3) Tools are used that have not been tested to assure that the correct application is being applied that is within the manufacturer specifications for that tool.

4) The boom truck crane hook safety latch was missing.

5) Nylon rigging straps that were damaged beyond the red indicator threads placed within the straps by the manufacturer were not removed from service and replaced.

6) The Superior BC-48 plate clamps were in use that had been addressed by the manufacturer in a memo as having a potential reduction of safety factor. Toe area on the clamp that the manufacturer had addressed was identified as the area of potential failure.

Employees are exposed to potential hazards that would very likely result in serious injuries that would have the potential of ending as a fatality in the workplace.

Citation 1, item 4 - \$350 fine

A safety-type hook or other device was not used when necessary to prevent lifting attachments from inadvertently lifting out of the hook:

a) The lifting hook of the single sheave cable block on the hydraulic Series 600 crane, which is mounted on the Ford flatbed truck, did not have a safety latch that closed across the throat of the hook to prevent rigging from inadvertently becoming unhooked during a lift. Employees are exposed to potential serious injuries if struck by material that suddenly came unhooked while being moved. (OSHA noted that the violation was complied with at a later inspection.)

Citation 1, item 5 - \$350 fine

Synthetic web sling(s) with snags, punctures, tears, or cuts were not immediately removed from service:

a) two synthetic two-inch by four-foot lifting straps were on the deck of the Ford boom truck and were available to be placed back in service. The straps were worn and damaged, showing the red indicator threads that provide evidence that the strap has reached the end of the service life for that strap. Employees are exposed to potential serious injuries in the event a strap failed while lifting material or equipment. (OSHA noted that this violation was complied with at a later inspection.)

According to OSHA, "employees were rigging a lift line for a "shortening splice". The plate clamp failed while attempting to re-torque bolts on the clamp of a line that was under a tensioned load. The line was released and struck three employees, and fragments struck a fourth employee. The accident victim that was hospitalized with critical injuries was struck by the line and thrown into the air. The victim struck the ground

with serious injuries received from the line and received additional serious injuries when he struck the ground. The other two employees received serious injuries when they were struck by the line. On-site emergency medical care was provided by paramedics who were members of the ski team. Emergency transport was requested, and two accident victims were transported by LifeFlight to a hospital in Bend. The third accident victim was transported by ambulance to the hospital. The fourth was transported by company vehicle to Immediate Care and was treated for minor injuries. Three of the victims were treated and released the same day.â€•

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