Fisherman Bypasses Deadman Controls



A fisherman was working alone on his boat when he became entangled in a net which was being wrapped around a revolving drum.

A hydraulic pump used to turn the drum was designed to be operated by a locking lever located in the cabin of the boat. The controls for the drum operation had been unsafely modified so that the deadman shut-down device at the rear of the boat had been bypassed. Somehow the victim became entangled in the net, and was unable to stop the revolving drum. Judging by the amount of net that was on top of him when he was found, it appeared that he was hauled around many times before the drum stopped revolving. He died of multiple injuries.

This fatality is a sad reminder of two safety rules: It can be very unsafe to work alone; and don’t alter safety devices such as deadman controls.