Mattress Spring Company Fined for Fatality

A Toronto-based company that manufactures inner spring units for mattresses has been fined $100,000, plus a 25 percent victim fine surcharge, after a worker was crushed to death.

On April 13, 2005, a worker was helping to operate a crating machine that is used to pack inner spring units by compressing them into crates for transport. He was found pinned between the compressed coils and the machine’s moving frame.

The worker had just begun to manually load the machine with the next load of mattress coils when the incident occurred. It was determined that he had been inside the machine adjusting the opening in order to pack more coils. He accessed the controls from inside the machine and instead of hitting a button that opened the machine, he inadvertently hit a button that rapidly closed it.

An Ontario Ministry of Labour investigation determined that the controls were in a position whereby accessing them from inside the machine could endanger a worker if the machine moved. Cause of the worker’s death was determined to be asphyxiation in combination with blunt force trauma caused by crushing.

Leggett & Platt Canada Co., operating as Globe Spring and Cushion Co. Ltd. pleaded guilty in the Ontario Court of Justice to a charge of failing to ensure that an operating control was in a location where the safety of a worker was not endangered by moving spring units.