Meat Packers Fatality File



Oregon Worker Dies After Falling into Meat Grinder

An Oregon man contracted to clean a meat processing plant died last week when he fell into a machine at the facility. Hugo Avalos-Chanon, age 41, of Southeast Portland died late Friday night after becoming entangled in a blender at the Interstate Meat Disrtibutors, Inc. plant in Clackamas, or, reported the Oregonian. Interstate Meat Distributors was cited in October of 2012 for multiple violations of worker safety standards, among them that a table saw did not have a hood to protect against arm injuries, nor was a rotating blade “guarded to prevent inadvertent contact.” However, these violations were corrected at the time of inspection, noted the Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division (OSHA) of the Department of Consumer and Business Services, which conducted the investigation. And a spokesperson for Oregon OSHA told the Oregonian that it’s “way too early to say” whether the cause of Avalos-Chanon’s death was linked to the violations cited in that report. Avalos-Chanon worked for a cleaning company that had been contracted to clean the Clackamas facility. At around 11:45 pm Friday, emergency workers responded to a call from the plant, and arrived on the scene to find him entangled in a blender used to regulate fat content in ground beef, according to the Oregonian. His body was extricated from the machine the following morning and the plant continued normal operation that day. According to deputy medical examiner for the state, Dr. Cliff Young, Avalos-Chanon died of “blunt force injuries and chopping wounds,” reported the Oregonian. Mesaros said OSHA’s investigation into the incident could take up to six months. This incident is not the first negative one to be linked to Interstate Meat. Ground beef from the company was named as the source of an E. coli outbreak that sickened 8 people in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. The company recalled approximately 41,000 pounds of ground beef for potential E. coli contamination that year.