

A 49 year old male employee suffered an Achilles tendon injury when his foot got caught between a pallet and a pallet jack that another employee was using to move material.

The incident occurred in the area known as the Bio Fine Department, Production Line 2, Pack Out area. The staging area is approximately 20' in length and 8' wide, holding approximately twenty pallets formed in two lines, ten pallets each. Forklifts are used on the east end to deliver pallets of flat-stack cardboard boxes. Manual pallet jacks are utilized to move the pallets from the staging area to pack out Lines 1 and 2 from the west side. The staging area is marked off by yellow high-visibility tape, creating aisles for employees and a manual pallet jack to maneuver through. There is an aisle on all sides of the staging area, except the east end, where forklifts operate on the production area floor. The aisle ways are shared by employees, and a manual pallet jack is used to move material from the staging area to the Palletizer Pack-Out Lines 1 and 2.

The Palletizer Pack-Out line 2 is directly across from the staging area and is separated by a single pallet of stacked flat boxes from the staging area. The single pallet is located on the west side of the staging area, with a yellow line on the production area floor surrounding it on three sides. The aisle between the single pallet and the staging area is approximately 4' wide for employees and pallets that are to be moved by a manual pallet jack to restock Lines 1 and 2 during production. Employees operate the machine by hand to ensure the machine is always supplied with stock during production.

The victim was working in an aisle next to a pallet of flat stacked boxes between the Palletizer Pack-Out Line 2 and Pack-Out staging areas. Another employee was moving a pallet of flat stacked boxes from the staging area with a manual pallet jack. The employee pulled the pallet out of the staging area and started to turn into the aisle way when he noticed the victim behind him trying to move out of the way. The victim's right foot got pinned between the pallet on the floor and the pallet being transported by the pallet jack. He fell backward on the pallet of partially stacked flat stack boxes on the floor of Line 2. The back of his right foot was pinned in the plastic pallet forklift hole of the stationary pallet on Line 2 by the moving pallet.

The victim received first aid on-site after the incident from another employee and then taken to UT Medical Center. The victim was seen by an Orthopedic Specialist who diagnosed him with a right Achilles rupture and subsequently he had surgery on his foot. Approximately 2 weeks later, he passed away at his home.

The Death Certificate lists two chain of events that were directly related to his death:

- a. CARDIAC ARREST MOST LIKELY DUE TO MASSIVE PULONARY EMBOLISM
- b. ACHILLES TENDON SURGERY

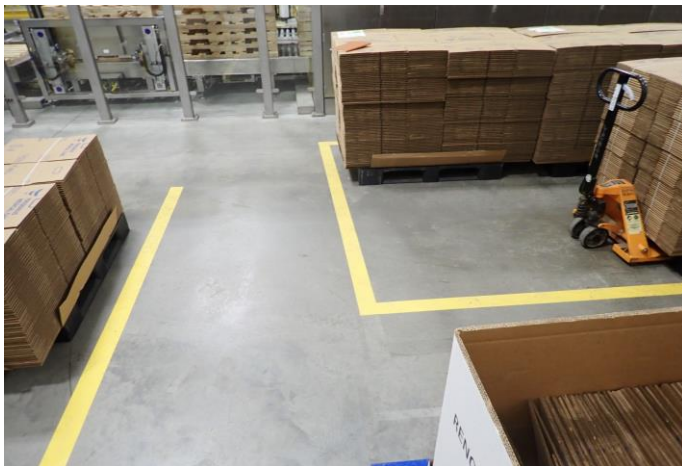
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Interviews with employees revealed that the employer provides pallet jack training through an online course and by a supervisor before they are released to operate them on their own.

**Citation(s) as Originally Issued**

A complete inspection was conducted at the accident scene. Some of the items cited may not directly relate to the fatality.

No citations were issued.



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