

\$1 Million Fine Imposed on Mining Company for Fatal Incident



A rock-crushing machine at a mining company's plant got jammed with a broken-off steelmoil point inside the crusher. After one failed attempt to remove themoil point, two workers positioned themselves above the crusher's jaws to use a cutting torch to free the point, which weighed about 53.5 kilograms. As the heat from the cutting torch softened the steel of the point, it was propelled vertically by the compressive power of the crusher jaws. The point struck both workers, killing one and critically injuring the other. The MOL investigation found the crusher's electrical motor hadn't been locked out and no measures were taken to release the stored energy in the crusher. The mining company pleaded guilty to three safety offences. The court fined it a total of \$1 million. A supervisor who was acting as a worker that day also pleaded guilty to failing to work in compliance with Ontario's mining regulation and was fined \$3,000 [Vale Canada Ltd. and Greg Taylor, Govt. News Release, Oct. 26, 2016].