

Failure to Anchor “Sleeper” Beams Results in \$50,000 Fine



A company that provides millwright and structural engineering services was hired to dismantle and replace a steel storage system inside a warehouse. The system consisted of ‘sleeper’ beams laid out on the ground and vertical upright posts welded onto the sleeper beams. A worker was welding a 12-foot upright post in place on a sleeper beam, while other workers were cutting loose an upright support using a grinder and a torch. As a result, sleeper beams and posts that were already welded in place rotated and knocked over two rows of upright posts. The worker who’d been welding was struck by the falling posts, which weighed more than 2,400 pounds. A crane was needed to lift the steel off the worker, who suffered leg injuries. An MOL investigation found that not all of the sleeper beams were anchored. The company pleaded guilty to failing to ensure that a sleeper beam was securely anchored prior to upright posts being installed and was fined \$50,000 [*Western Mechanical Electrical Millwright Services Ltd.*, Govt. News Release, Feb. 17, 2016].