

Hazard Alert



Equipment Maintenance

Hazard Summary

In late October 2022, a farm worker was fatally injured when they were struck by a falling grain auger. The welds broke on the base of the auger frame where it was attached to a set of wheels. The worksite was noisy and the worker was focused on another task and did not see the auger tip over.



Hazard Location

All equipment on farms, construction sites and manufacturing facilities where the stability of a piece of equipment is dependent on the strength of the welds holding it in place.

Contributing Factors

The equipment was more than 20 years old and had not been maintained to manufacturer's specifications. The portable auger had been positioned to load the grain corn into the cooling tank after it had been dried in the dryer. The environmental elements over the years, combined with the vibration of the equipment, caused the welds holding the auger frame to the wheel axle to become weak over time, and fail.

Legislated Requirements

On Prince Edward Island, all provincially regulated workplaces, including farms, must comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Legislated requirements under the OHS Act related to this hazard include:

- Section 12(1)(b) - an employer shall ensure that any item, device, material, equipment or machinery provided for the use of workers at a workplace is properly maintained, and is properly equipped with the safety features or devices, as recommended by the manufacturer or required by the regulations.



Recommendations

All employers who work with equipment should:

- Inspect equipment to ensure it is in good repair before use
- Take time to maintain equipment that is damaged
- Use competent workers to repair broken equipment, such as certified welders and mechanics
- Take extra precautions to inspect equipment left outside in the elements from year to year

