

## N E W S   R E L E A S E

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### **Cal/OSHA Cites Fuel Distributor Nearly \$100,000 after Fatal Explosion: Investigation Determines Lack of Safety Measures Caused Death, Dismemberment and Severe Employee Burns**

**San Bernardino**—Cal/OSHA has cited fuel distribution company National Distribution Services Inc. (NDS) \$99,345 following an investigation into an explosion at the company's Corona facility that killed one employee and left another with severe burns. The owner of the company has been previously cited for similar incidents.

On May 6, 2014, two employees attempted welding operations on a 9,000-gallon tanker truck containing an unknown amount of crude oil. The tank had not been purged or tested for flammable vapors, resulting in the explosion. Samuel Enciso, 52, was a welder who had been with NDS for four years. He was found dead on the floor of the facility with his right hand and lower arm completely severed. A second employee with five years of experience suffered burns to more than 50 percent of his body.

Investigators from the San Bernardino Cal/OSHA District Office determined that NDS contributed to this incident by failing to have required safety procedures in place for working with flammable vapors. Additionally, investigators found that NDS failed to train employees on the dangers of welding near combustible materials.

"California requires employers to have and adhere to an Injury and Illness Prevention Program" said Christine Baker, Director of the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR). Cal/OSHA, formally known as the Division of Occupational Safety and Health, is a division of DIR. "This preventable death is a reminder of what can happen when that requirement is ignored," said Baker.

While investigating the May 6 event, investigators learned about a previous explosion at the Corona facility that occurred under similar circumstances, and involved the same two NDS employees. On September 25, 2012, the lid of a fuel tanker blew through the ceiling of the repair facility after the employees commenced welding on a truck filled with flammable vapors. No injuries occurred on that date.

“Enforcement of California safety laws sends a message to non-compliant employers,” said Juliann Sum, Acting Chief of Cal/OSHA. “You cannot cut corners when it comes to worker safety.”

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration served NDS with an [emergency restriction order](#) on August 14, prohibiting the company from using cargo tank motor vehicles. The company appealed the order in September.

The owner of NDS, Carl Bradley Johansson, served prison time following a previous similar incident. In the 1990s, Johansson operated a business in Montebello known as Atlas Bulk Carriers. On September 27, 1993 there was an explosion involving welding operations on a fuel tanker that had also not been purged or tested. This incident also took the life of a welder employed by the company. Atlas Bulk Carriers was cited by Cal/OSHA for this incident.

Cal/OSHA helps protect workers from health and safety hazards on the job in almost every workplace in California. Employers who want to learn more about California workplace health and safety standards or labor law violations can access information on DIR’s [website](#) as well as on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Cal/OSHA’s [Consultation Program](#) provides free and voluntary assistance to employers and employee organizations to improve their health and safety programs. Employers should call (800) 963-9424 for assistance from the Cal/OSHA Consultation Program.

Employees with work-related questions or complaints may call the California Workers’ Information Hotline at (866) 924-9757 for recorded information in English and Spanish on a variety of work-related topics. Complaints can also be filed confidentially with [Cal/OSHA District Offices](#).

For media inquiries contact Erika Monterroza at (510) 286-1164 or Peter Melton at (510) 286-7046.



The [California Department of Industrial Relations](#), established in 1927, protects and improves the health, safety, and economic well-being of over 18 million wage earners, and helps their employers comply with state labor laws. DIR is housed within the [Labor & Workforce Development Agency](#). Non-media inquiries can contact DIR’s Communications Call Center at 1-844-LABOR-DIR (1-844-522-6734) for help in locating the appropriate [division or program](#) in our department.