

N E W S R E L E A S E

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Cal/OSHA Cites Los Angeles Engineering, Inc. Over \$100,000 Following Fatal Trench Collapse

Los Angeles – Cal/OSHA last Friday cited Covina-based Los Angeles Engineering, Inc. following a trench collapse in March which killed one employee and severely injured another. The two pipe layers were checking the depth of the trench when an unshored wall caved in.

“When safety is not a priority, there can be tragic consequences, and this incident is a sad reminder of that fact,” said Christine Baker, director of the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR). Cal/OSHA, also known as the Division of Occupational Safety and Health, is a division of DIR.

Cal/OSHA issued four citations to Los Angeles Engineering, Inc., one general, two serious and a willful serious violation, totaling \$100,635. Violations included failure to properly protect the trench from caving in, not inspecting the trench after a cave-in that occurred earlier in the day, lack of employee training on heat illness prevention, and lack of an effective Injury and Illness Prevention Plan. The citation was classified as Willful because the employer failed to install the required shoring in the trench after the earlier cave-in and still sent workers into the unprotected trench.

“Incidents like this are heartbreaking because they are so unnecessary,” said Acting Cal/OSHA Chief Juliann Sum. “Employers must be more vigilant in protecting worker safety.”

A Willful violation is cited when an employer is aware that a hazardous condition exists but makes no reasonable effort to eliminate it. A Serious workplace safety violation is cited when there is a realistic possibility that death or serious physical harm could result from the actual hazard created by the violation. A General violation is one in which an accident or illness may result but would probably not cause death or serious harm.

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 can get information on Cal/OSHA’s [website](#). 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 toll-free California Workers' Information Line 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](#).

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