

N E W S R E L E A S E

News Release No.: 2019-20

Date: February 20, 2019

Cal/OSHA Cites Contractors for Serious Safety Violations in San Francisco Twin Peaks Tunnel Fatality

San Francisco—Cal/OSHA has cited a joint venture formed between two contractors \$65,300 for multiple serious safety violations after a worker was fatally struck by a steel beam last August while working on a light rail tunnel project in San Francisco.

“Hazards in tunnel construction work can include cave-ins, falling objects and breathable airborne contaminants,” said Cal/OSHA Chief Juliann Sum. “Employers must identify and evaluate the particular hazards in their workplace and train employees on safe work practices to avoid injury, illness or even death.”

Shimmick Construction Co., Inc. of Oakland and Con-Quest Contractors Inc. of San Francisco formed a joint venture to work on the Twin Peaks Tunnel Rehabilitation & Rail Replacement project, which included refurbishing infrastructure, replacing rails and upgrading signal systems and other parts of the over 100-year-old tunnel.

On August 10, 2018, employees were using heavy equipment and tools to work in and around the tunnel. One worker was operating a rail crane to push two flat railcars loaded with equipment into the tunnel. The crane’s boom was in an upward vertical position when it struck an overhead steel beam. The beam was dislodged from its support brackets and fell approximately 13 feet, fatally crushing an employee walking nearby.

Cal/OSHA investigators learned the two employers did not identify the potential hazards presented by pushing two loaded flat railcars into the tunnel and did not control the crane’s travel to avoid collisions. Investigators discovered the crane operators had not been trained to safely operate the equipment, and workers had not been trained on safe procedures when the crane was being operated near them.

Cal/OSHA cited the joint venture \$65,300 in proposed penalties for two serious and two serious accident-related violations. The serious accident-related violations were cited for the employer’s failure to implement an effective injury and illness prevention plan and failure to control the crane while it was moving. The serious citations were issued for violations related to the employer’s failure to safely transport workers while in the tunnel.

A violation is classified as serious when there is a realistic possibility that death or serious harm could result from the actual hazard created by the violation. Violations are classified as accident-related when the injury, illness or fatality is caused by the violation.

Cal/OSHA's [Mining and Tunneling Unit](#) investigates complaints of hazards and reports of accidents in mines and tunnels, and issues citations when violations are found. It also conducts pre-job safety conferences, issues permits prior to any initial underground mining or tunneling operation, performs periodic inspections of tunnels, mines and quarries, and [offers safety training](#).

Cal/OSHA helps protect workers from health and safety hazards on the job in almost every workplace in California. [Cal/OSHA's Consultation Services Branch](#) provides free and voluntary assistance to employers to improve their health and safety programs. Employers should call (800) 963-9424 for assistance from Cal/OSHA Consultation Services.

Employees with work-related questions or complaints may contact DIR's Call Center in English or Spanish at 844-LABOR-DIR (844-522-6734). The California Workers' Information line at 866-924-9757 provides recorded information in English and Spanish on a variety of work-related topics. Complaints can also be filed confidentially with [Cal/OSHA district offices](#).

Members of the press may contact Peter Melton or Lucas Brown at (510) 286-1161, and are encouraged to [subscribe to get email alerts](#) on DIR's press releases or other departmental updates.

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