

MNMM Fatal 2008-08

- Machinery Accident
- May 3, 2008 (Kentucky)
- Sand & Gravel Operation
- Co-owner
- 51 years old
- 45 weeks experience

Overview

The victim was fatally injured when the excavator he was operating fell into an 8-foot deep sump hole. He was attempting to clean a clogged ditch to drain water from the pit after a recent rain. Sump holes had previously been dug in the pit floor to drain water. The pit floor was covered by several feet of water and the sump holes were not visible.



Root Cause

Management policies and procedures were inadequate and failed to ensure that persons could safely perform tasks when working on the pit floor. Potential hazards were not identified and addressed before performing the task of dewatering the pit.

Best Practices

- Examine working places, identify hazards, and assess and control risks. Be alert to changing conditions. Maintain a safe distance from the edge of excavations and slopes. If the safety of travelways cannot be positively determined, do not travel on them.
- Where hazards in travelways are not clearly distinguishable or immediately obvious, install barriers, markers, or other warning devices to aid equipment operators and limit travel of mobile equipment.
- Ensure all miners are trained to recognize workplace hazards, specifically the limited visibility inherent to the operation of large equipment.
- Wear seat belts when operating self-propelled mobile equipment.