

Worker Pinned Beneath Lift Table

Incident Date: January 18 or 19, 2009 / Location: Slave Lake, AB / Industry: Wood Products



AI Teaching Illustration. Shows gravity and pinch-point exposure below a loaded table. Equipment and posture are schematic; no injury is depicted.

What Happened

An apprentice millwright was assigned to grease the scissor mechanisms beneath veneer-stacker tables during a night shift. The worker entered beneath a raised table carrying about 800 kilograms of veneer. The stacker was not locked or tagged out, and the worker had no personal locks.

A cleanup worker later discovered the table bearing down on the millwright and called for help. Responders used two chain hoists to raise it and free the worker. Emergency medical services declared the worker deceased. The medical examiner identified asphyxiation caused by the table and veneer load pinning the worker against the mechanism's base.

Why This Became Fatal

Powered movement and the raised load were not safely controlled before access. OHS found no task hazard assessment or formal training record. The lockout procedure referred to maintenance-entry procedures that had not been developed. Improvised support pipes were used at times, but none were in place during this incident.

NEVER FORGET.

LET THEIR STORY PREVENT RECURRENCE.

What Safe Looks Like

Control gravity as well as electrical, hydraulic and other stored energy.



1 Remove the Exposure

Unload and lower where possible; keep clear of pinch zones.

2 Isolate and Verify

Apply personal locks and verify all hazardous energy controls.

3 Secure Raised Equipment

Use specified support devices and a task-specific procedure before any access beneath a raised table.

AI Teaching Illustration. Unloaded, lowered planning hold point; no under-table access authorized. **LSR links:** Energy Isolation; Line of Fire.

Investigation Outcome

OHS ordered **Alberta Plywood** to assess the servicing task with worker participation and ensure support stands met manufacturer or professional-engineer specifications. The employer complied. **A prosecution outcome was not confirmed** in the report or the public conviction sources checked; this must not be labelled 'no charges.'

Talk It Through with Your Crew

- 1 What raised equipment or loads could descend while we service them?
- 2 Does our isolation method control gravity and hydraulic energy as well as power?
- 3 Are the required support devices and maintenance-entry steps actually available?
- 4 Would you stop or refuse access beneath equipment without verified support and isolation?

SAFETY COMES FIRST.

Your Right to Refuse – Alberta. You may refuse work you reasonably believe presents an undue hazard: a serious and immediate threat. Promptly report the refusal and reasons to your employer or supervisor. They must investigate. Contact Alberta OHS if unresolved. Take reasonable care not to endanger others. You are protected from reprisal.

Sources: [Alberta OHS investigation F-409512](#), pp. 3-7; summary completed February 19, 2010. [Alberta refusal guidance](#). Prepared October 19, 2026. LSR links are learning associations, not findings of a breach.