

# **OSHA Cites Mueller Industries for 128 Safety Violations**

FULTON, Miss. (AP) - Federal labor officials are recommending that three Mueller Industries subsidiaries in Mississippi pay \$638,000 in fines for allegedly exposing employees to unsafe working conditions.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited the companies in Fulton for 128 alleged violations.

The companies have 15 days to contest OSHA's findings.

John Hansen, president of manufacturing operations for Mueller Industries, told The Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal the company is reviewing the citations and will meet with OSHA to discuss them.

"Mueller undertook measures to address many of the suggestions and concerns shared by OSHA," he said. "We will continue to further enhance our safety program by improving upon our work practices, training, and encouraging the valuable input of our employees."

Mueller is headquartered in Memphis, Tenn., with 20 facilities in eight state and two foreign countries.

OSHA said it began investigating in July 2009 after a maintenance worker at Mueller Copper Tube Co. in Fulton died and two others were injured when a flammable liquid leaked from an electric pump and ignited.

According to the OSHA release, more than 90 of the citations were levied against Mueller Copper Tube. OSHA findings included failure to guard machinery, exposure to electrical shock, unsafe electrical equipment and practices, and failure to label hazardous chemicals.

Mueller Copper Tube also received the bulk of the fines - \$413,500.

Mueller Fittings 22 citations included unsafe propane storage and handling, unsafe material storage and likelihood of exposure to blood-borne pathogens. It faces \$166,500 in fines. Mueller Packaging was issued 12 citations, including unsafe crane operation, failing to lock out sources of hazardous energy and electrical hazards. OSHA has recommended \$103,000 in fines.

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