Tyson Slapped With OSHA Fine

Associated Press

HUTCHINSON, Kan. (AP) — A federal workplace safety agency has recommended that Tyson Foods pay a $147,000 fine because of several serious workplace violations, including one that led to a worker's hand being severed at the company's Hutchinson plant.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration said that in the last 10 years the plant has had seven serious violations, and that some of the most recent violations were "willful." OSHA proposed the $147,000 fine for four violations found during its latest inspection.

Tyson spokesman Worth Sparkman said the company is reviewing the citations and will work with the federal agency to resolve the concerns.

"We expect our employees to perform to the highest safety and health standards across Tyson Foods operations at all times. Our efforts include safety policies and training, and the involvement of workers in our safety committees," he said. Tyson Foods has 15 days to appeal.

OSHA also ordered the plant, which has about 150 employees, be placed in its Severe Violator Enforcement Program, which "focuses on recalcitrant employers that endanger workers by committing willful, repeat or failure-to-abate violations," according to OSHA. Under the program, OSHA may inspect any of the employer's facilities "if it has reasonable grounds to believe there are similar violations."

Andrew Williams, 51, lost his arm from the elbow down in June when his clothing became caught in equipment at the plant and his arm was pulled into moving gears.

The plant was also cited for removing railings, which exposed workers to amputation hazards, and for failing to train workers on lockout/tagout procedures and locking out the equipment to prevent its unintentional operation.

"Removing guards and failing to train workers in proper lockout procedures is inexcusable," Judy Freeman, OSHA's area director in Wichita, said in a news release.

Source URL (retrieved on *04/25/2015 - 2:34pm*):
http://www.chem.info/news/2013/12/tyson-slapped-osha-fine