



Exploding Tire Kills Grandpa Working At Port of Los Angeles: Another Severely Injured

POSTED BY CONTRIBUTING EDITOR ON MAY 15, 2019



A dock worker was killed Wednesday and another severely injured in an accident involving a blown tire at a container terminal at the Port of Los Angeles.

The Fenix Marine Services terminal on Pier 300 was closed following the 7:30 a.m. accident, which will be investigated by Cal/OSHA, Port Police and other agencies, port spokeswoman Rachel Campbell said.

The blown tire was attached to a top-handler, which is used to move containers once they are unloaded from ships.

The workers were members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union. Paramedics took the severely injured worker to Harbor-UCLA Medical Center in Torrance. The worker who died was identified as Jose Santoyo, a 58-year-old grandfather.

“When I got the call this morning about the accident at the port that killed one ILWU mechanic, Jose Santoyo, and injured another, my thoughts immediately went to their families,” county Supervisor Janice Hahn said in a statement. “My son is also a mechanic at the port and I cannot imagine the heartache his family is experiencing today. Accidents like this are rare but this is a reminder of just how dangerous these jobs can be.”

Officials with ILWU Local 13 told KTLA that Santoyo died on his grandson’s first birthday. Union leaders told the station the two workers were inflating the top-handler tire, which is about 5 to 6 feet in diameter, when it exploded. They identified the injured worker as Pedro Chavann, who suffered severe head injuries and was in a medically induced coma.

“I am heartbroken to hear that this morning we lost one of our ILWU brothers in an industrial accident at the Port of Los Angeles while another has been seriously injured,” said Los Angeles City Councilman Joe Buscaino.

“Please keep their families in your prayers and respect their privacy at this time,” he said. “Today is a tragic reminder of the danger that thousands of workers face every day working on our docks. My office will continue to work with the ILWU, Port Police, LAPD and LAFD as they investigate the cause of the accident.”

Port of Los Angeles Executive Director Gene Seroka added that the accident was “particularly tragic” because it occurred on the day of the ILWU’s annual “First Blood” event, which honors those who have lost their lives working on the waterfront.

Fenix Marine Services issued a statement saying company officials are “deeply saddened” over the fatality and injury.

“The safety and well-being of our employees is always our primary concern and an investigation is under way with local agencies to ensure a cause is identified and to prevent such incidents,” according to the company. “Our thoughts and heartfelt condolences go out to their families, loved ones and all of our ILWU colleagues.”