



U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety & Health Administration

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OSHA News Release

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OSHA Regional News Release

**U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Public Affairs**

Region 6

**Region 6 News Release OSHA-05-195-DAL
Monday, Feb. 14, 2005
Contact: Diana Petterson or Elizabeth Todd
Phone: (214) 767-4776, ext. 222 or 221**

OSHA Cites Metairie Construction Company for Safety Violations Following Fatal Accident

NEW ORLEANS -- A trenching and excavation fatality has resulted in citations and proposed penalties of \$65,600 to a Metairie, La. construction company from the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Wallace C. Drennan Inc., a water and sewer excavation contractor that employs about 107 workers, was issued citations for alleged willful, serious and other-than-serious violations following an OSHA inspection that began Nov. 2 at the company's worksite on Highway 15 and Falgout Lane in Point a La Hache where an employee was installing a sewer line in a trench approximately 7 feet deep.

"If OSHA's safety standards had been followed, it is possible that this fatality could have been avoided," said Greg Honaker, area director in Baton Rouge.

The alleged willful violation was issued for failing to protect employees from the hazards of a cave-in while installing sewer piping at the base of a 7-foot-deep trench. A willful violation is one committed with intentional disregard of or plain indifference to the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

The alleged serious violation was issued for failing to adequately protect employees from working in hazardous conditions associated with trenching and excavations. A serious violation is one that could cause death or serious physical harm to employees and the employer knew or should have known of the hazard.

An alleged other-than-serious violation was issued for failing to notify OSHA within eight hours of a fatality. An other-than-serious violation is a hazardous condition that would probably not cause death or serious physical harm, but would have a direct and immediate relationship to the safety and or health of the employees.

The company has 15 working days from receipt of the citations to comply, request an informal conference with the Baton Rouge area director, or to contest the citations and penalties before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

Employers and employees with questions regarding workplace safety and health standards can call the Baton Rouge OSHA area office at (225) 298-5458 or, OSHA's toll-free hotline number at 1-

800-321-6742 to report workplace accidents, fatalities, or situations posing imminent danger to workers.

Employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthful workplace for their employees. OSHA's role is to assure the safety and health of American's workers by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach and education; establishing partnership, and encouraging continual improvement in workplace safety and health. For more information visit www.osha.gov.

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