

An assistant-driller is fatally struck by a tree branch on the ground when riding as a passenger on a snowmobile

Around 13:30 on February 22, 2014, a driller and assistant-driller climbed aboard a single-seat snowmobile to travel to the drill site. The driller drove the snowmobile and the assistant-driller sat in the back. The driller was travelling about 15 km/h while keeping to the left to avoid going over a supply hose running along the right side of the logging road. About 13:40, the left ski of the snowmobile suddenly came into contact with a tree branch lying on the ground. The impact lifted the end of the branch which penetrated the assistant-driller's thigh and perforated his femoral artery. The assistant-driller was ejected and the driver lost control of the snowmobile which came to rest a short distance away. Emergency services were called and the worker was flown by helicopter to the hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Fatal Accident

Date: February 22, 2014
Category: Drilling
Task: Workers travelling by snowmobile
Position: Assistant-driller



Source: Rapport CSST

Causes of Accident

- The snowmobile ski lifted a tree branch lying on the edge of the logging road after its construction and mortally wounded a passenger.
- Since the passenger sat in the back of the single-seat snowmobile, he had to spread his legs and was thus exposed to an impact with a tree branch.

Preventative Measures

- Analyze the risks associated with the construction and use of a logging road.
- Develop and distribute to employees a detailed procedure on the preparation and maintenance of access roads depending on their use.
- Regularly inspect the condition of access roads to drilling site (terrain, ground and overhead obstructions, road width, proper installation of bridges and culverts, etc.).
- Analyze the risks associated with snowmobile use
- Train workers on snowmobile or ATV use, including the prohibition of two people aboard a single-seat vehicle, how to recognize a single-seat vehicle from a two-seater, where the first aid kit is located and the prohibition of transporting passengers in a sleigh or trailer.
- Develop and distribute to employees a detailed procedure on the use of an ATV or snowmobile.
- Place a decal on all single-seat snowmobiles and VTTs prohibiting the presence of passengers.

Additional Information

Regulation

- *An Act Respecting Off-highway Vehicles* Article 21
 - Online or purchase www.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca

Other documents

- *Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail du Québec*. Direction régionale du Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean. Investigation report of a fatal accident occurring on February 22, 2014. Québec: CSST, 2014 Code: EN-004032
 - Online <http://www.centredoc.csst.qc.ca/pdf/ed004032.pdf>
- Diamond Drillers (2011) *National Occupational Standards. Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MIHR/RHIM)* Task N 4 sub-task: J). P.88 and Task O 2 sub-task: D) to F)
 - Online at <http://www.miningcertification.ca/fr/>
- Safe Methods Handbook: Surface (2009) - *Canadian Diamond Drilling Association* 142 p.
 - Purchase <http://www.cdda.ca/Publications-Fr.aspx> or borrow at www.centredoc.csst.qc.ca
- Excellence in Health and Safety e-toolkit (EHS) Version-01.2009 *Association canadienne des prospecteurs et entrepreneurs (ACPE) / The Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada (PDAC)* 784 p.
 - Online at <http://www.pdac.ca/programs/e3-plus/toolkits/health-and-safety>

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