

06-19

For Immediate Release
February 13, 2006

WABI IRON & STEEL CORP. FINED \$50,000 FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY VIOLATION

TEMISKAMING SHORES, Ont. – Wabi Iron & Steel Corp., a Temiskaming Shores, Ont.-based designer and manufacturer of parts and components for heavy industrial equipment, was fined \$50,000 today for a violation of the Occupational Health and Safety Act that resulted in serious head and chest injuries to an employee.

On February 24, 2004, a worker was using an “overhead travelling crane” (a crane that moves along an overhead rail) to lift a stack of seven large steel “moulding boxes” (boxes used as moulds for the fabrication of metal parts) when a 0.953-centimetre (3/8-inch) lifting chain broke causing a “spreader beam” (a large beam used to stabilize a load that is being lifted) to break apart and fly over the boxes. The worker was struck by the beam on the left side of the head and chest and was taken by ambulance to hospital in North Bay with broken bones, lacerations and a fracture to the front of the skull. The incident occurred at the company’s foundry at 330 Broadwood Avenue in Temiskaming Shores, a city located about 150 kilometres (93 miles) south of Timmins.

A Ministry of Labour investigation found there were no written procedures in place for the lifting of moulding boxes and insufficient training provided by the company to workers on the determination of safe limits for lifting loads and the calculation of box weight. The injured worker was not made aware of the weight of the boxes when they were filled with metal castings and sand. Each box weighed 794 kilograms (1,750 pounds) when empty. The manufacturer of the chain used to lift the boxes specified a maximum working load limit of 3,221 kilograms (7,100 pounds), but the seven boxes being lifted weighed about 19,786 kilograms (43,620 pounds). There was also no record of annual inspections being performed on the crane or other lifting equipment by a competent person and no records to indicate the crane was properly maintained in good condition.

Wabi Iron & Steel Corp. pleaded guilty, as an employer, to failing to ensure the moulding boxes were lifted in such a manner, and with such precautions and safeguards, to ensure workers’ safety would not be endangered, as required by Section 45(a) of the Regulations for Industrial Establishments. This was contrary to Section 25(1)(c) of the act.

The fine was imposed by Justice of the Peace Michael Kitlar of the Ontario Court of Justice in Temiskaming Shores. In addition, the court imposed a 25-per-cent victim fine surcharge, as required by the Provincial Offences Act. The surcharge is credited to a special provincial government fund to assist victims of crime.

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Court Information at a Glance

Location:	Ontario Court of Justice Dymond Community Hall 181 Drive Inn, Theatre Road Temiskaming Shores, Ontario
Judge:	Justice of the Peace Michael Kitlar
Date / Time:	February 13, 2006, 9:30 a.m.
Defendants:	Wabi Iron & Steel Corp.
Matter:	Occupational Health & Safety

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