

http://www.nj.com/hudson/index.ssf/2016/08/worker_at_jersey_city_rail_facility_dies_in_appare.html

Worker at Jersey City rail facility killed when container falls on him

By [Patrick Villanova](#) | [The Jersey Journal](#)

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A male worker was killed when a container fell on him at the Norfolk Southern facility in Jersey City on Monday, Aug. 15. (Reena Rose Sibayan | The Jersey Journal)

A worker at a Jersey City rail and shipping facility died in an industrial accident this afternoon when a container crushed the machine he was operating.

Members of the Jersey City Police and Fire departments are currently responding to the Norfolk Southern facility at 125 County Road in the northwest corner of Jersey City where the man was killed around 1:30 p.m.

A source with knowledge of the situation said the victim -- who is an employee of a company that contracts with Norfolk Southern -- was lifting a storage container using a motorized container handler when the freight fell and crushed the cab with him inside.

Jersey City spokeswoman Jennifer Morrill said initial reports indicate that the wire that is part of lift snapped, causing the container and the crane to collapse on the employee.

Norfolk Southern Rail Police are leading the investigation, Morrill said.

Leni Uddyback-Fortson, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration, said the federal agency has also initiated an investigation of the incident. Uddyback-Fortson said the victim worked for Iselin-based H&M International Transportation, which was cited for a safety violation at the Jersey City facility in 2014.

"Rail yard employees working as ground personnel unlocking stacked container boxes were exposed to crushing hazards during removal of container boxes," [according to OSHA records](#).

A message left for H&M International Transportation was not immediately returned this afternoon.

The OSHA records indicate that H&M's previous violation at the Jersey City facility occurred "on or about" Aug. 4, 2014.

Authorities have not yet released the man's identity and are in the process of notifying his next of kin, Morrill added.

"Norfolk Southern extends its deepest sympathy to the family and friends of the deceased," said David Pigeon, a spokesman for Norfolk Southern. "We are cooperating with the investigators to determine the cause of this incident."

Journal staff writer Corey McDonald contributed to this report.

http://www.nj.com/hudson/index.ssf/2017/03/widow_sues_on_behalf_of_husband_crushed_in_jersey.html

Widow of Bayonne man crushed by cargo container files lawsuit



By [Michaelangelo Conte](#) | [The Jersey Journal](#)

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JERSEY CITY -- The widow of a Bayonne man crushed when a cargo container fell on a vehicle he was operating has filed a federal lawsuit against nine companies, blaming unsafe equipment, an unsafe workplace and insufficient training for his death.

The H&M International Transportation employee Jorge Gomez, 51, of Bayonne, died after a shipping container fell onto the lifting machine he was operating at the Croxton Intermodal Terminal on County Road in Jersey City on Aug. 15, 2016.

Jersey City spokeswoman Jennifer Morrill said at the time that investigators' initial assessment was that a cable that was part of the machine lifting a freight container snapped, causing the container to fall on Gomez.

Named as defendants in the suit are H&M, an Iselin-based logistics company; Norfolk Southern Railroad, based in Mount Laurel; Consolidated Rail Corporation, based in Philadelphia; Technical Services International, based in Sayreville and Mi-Jack Products, based in Illinois, the federal complaint says.

The lawsuit, filed by Liakas Law of New York City on behalf of Carmen Rosa Gomez, also names Hoist Liftruck Manufacturing, based in Illinois; FedEx Freight, based in Arkansas; General Cable Industries, based in Kentucky and PMX Industries, based in Iowa, as defendants.

"Jorge dedicated himself to his family, his church and his job. This incident was completely avoidable and it is unfortunate to see people like Jorge put in serious danger because workers' safety is not a top priority," said Stephen Liakas, the Gomez family attorney. "Jorge, his family and his co-workers deserve answers."

Born in Puerto Rico, Gomez lived in Jersey City before moving to Bayonne in 2006. The father of eight children, Gomez was also a member of First Assembly of God Church in Bayonne.

In their answers to the lawsuit, H&M, Mi-Jacks, FedEx and Norfolk Southern all blamed Gomez for the accident that caused his own death.

"We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the Gomez family," a FedEx Freight spokesman said. "FedEx Freight believes the allegations made against it are without merit and will defend the lawsuit."

The lawsuit claims the defendants' or their agents acted with a reckless or callous indifference to the constitutional rights of others. Gomez's widow seeks an unstated amount in compensatory damages, punitive damages, pre- and post judgment interest, and legal fees.

The lift vehicle Jorge Gomez was operating was unsafe, the lawsuit also claims.

Based on an inspection of the facility at 125 County Rd. conducted on Aug. 15, 2016, the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited H&M, saying it had not ensured each operator was properly trained and evaluated on use of trucks used for loading and unloading trains, according to documents obtained from OSHA.

OSHA also said employees were exposed to injuries because they were operating loaders that should have been removed from service because of known maintenance issues. The proposed penalties are \$12,000 for the first citation and \$8,000 for the second.

A spokeswoman for OSHA said today that H&M is currently within a period of days during which it can appeal the citations.

In their answers to the lawsuit, Norfolk Southern Railroad, H&M, Mi-Jacks and FedEx deny the allegations or the degree of their liability.

Representatives of Hoist Trucklift and Technical Services International said they have no comment. Other defendants could not be reached for comment or could not immediately comment.

The lawsuit demands a jury trial.