



# Staten Island Advance

## Seaman killed by mooring lines

Man became tangled in hawsers that were being used to tow another vessel

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**STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE**

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- The rhythms of work on the water seemed to have resumed yesterday at the Moran Towing Corp. dock in Port Richmond, after a deckhand was crushed to death on board one of the company's tugboats in Hackensack River near Secaucus, N.J., early Sunday morning.

Ricardo Young, 50, of Queens, died at around 2 a.m. on board the Turecamo Girls when he became tangled in lines, or hawsers, being used to tow another vessel.

According to authorities, he received the injuries while adjusting the lines at the rear of the boat.

A statement from Moran Towing Corp. based in New Canaan, Conn., said personnel on the Turecamo Girls attempted to provide medical aid to Young but were not successful in reviving him.

"Moran Towing personnel immediately alerted emergency response officials and the Coast Guard and are fully cooperating with the authorities as they investigate this tragic accident," according to the release.

Young had been an employee with Moran Towing since August 2006.

A spokeswoman from the U.S. Coast Guard declined to comment.

A shipmate went back to check on him and found him tangled in the cables, New Jersey State Police Sgt. Stephen Jones said.

Although workers at the Port Richmond dock had been instructed not to speak to the media, they could be heard around the shipyard, retelling the gruesome story in hushed tones -- discussing the cold, the wind, the river and what might have gone wrong.

"It's heavy equipment that you're towing and moving around, and the lines are big; you work 24 hours a day," said Capt. Steve Oravets, of Local 33, UMD, the union which represented Young as well as some 2,400 other tugboat and barge workers in the tri-state area.

He said a few years ago, on board the same boat, a young deckhand had his arm torn off in an accident.

"You get legs, broken off, torn off, arms crushed --those lines they have a tremendous amount of strain on them, they snap back and they have the power to kill you," said Oravets, estimating about one fatality occurs every year on board tugs and barges in the tri-state area.

Typically, he said, there are five workers aboard a tug boat: Two deckhands, a captain, an engineer and a mate.

"The technology is there to improve the safety aboard tugs and barges," said Oravets, adding the union has been petitioning everybody from Congress to the tug companies to make the investment and put new safety measures in place.

TAG: Material from the Star-Ledger was used in this report.

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