Worker trapped under slate slabs

By SETH HARKNESS
Herald Staff

CASTLETON — A quarry worker was rushed to the hospital after being pinned beneath nearly 6,000 pounds of slate on Friday afternoon.

The worker, whose name could not be determined, was helping to unload four large slabs of slate from the back of a trailer when the accident occurred at about 2 p.m.

He was on the trailer bed when the slabs fell on him.

The severity of the man's injuries could not be determined Friday night. He was unconscious and seemed to have trouble breathing when rescue workers carried him on to the ambulance, said Castleton Fire Chief Kerry Fowler.

Each 1-inch-thick slab, 4 feet wide by 10 feet long, weighed about 1,600 pounds, Fowler said he was told.

By the time the fire department reached the gravel quarry known as Ruby's Pit east of the village on Route 4A, Fowler said other quarry workers had broken the slabs apart with hammers and freed the man.

The Regional Ambulance Service took the man to Rutland Regional Medical Center for treatment.

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2003 Worker trapped under slate slabs rescued

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Quarry

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Four other men were working at the quarry Friday afternoon. One of them, who had helped to break up the slabs, said he was too shaken up by the mishap to talk about it.

A quarry official at the scene also declined to discuss the accident.

The injured worker was in his first week on the job at the quarry, Fowler said. The slate apparently was being trucked into the gravel pit for milling, he said.

Since the accident occurred in a quarry, the investigation falls to the federal Mine, Safety and Healthy Agency rather than Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

A Vermont OSHA official in Montpelier said late Friday afternoon he had been told of the accident and was passing on the information to the nearest MSHA office in Albany.

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