



FATALITY NARRATIVE

Skid Steer Loader Operator Impaled by Rebar*

Industry: Site preparation contractors
Task: Operating skid steer loader to remove demolition debris
Occupation: Laborer
Type of Incident: Struck against/Impalement

Release Date: October 25, 2012
Incident Date: September 15, 2011
Case No.: 11WA03701
SHARP Report No.: 71-115-2012

On September 15, 2011, a laborer died when he was impaled in the neck by rebar as he was operating a skid steer loader. The 41-year-old victim was a laborer and a 14-year member of the local Laborers' International Union. The victim was employed by a site preparation contractor and had been working for two months on a project to demolish a 26-story apartment building. The victim was operating a skid steer loader to remove demolition debris on the building's 21st floor. On the floor above him remote-controlled demolition machines were making holes in the floor. As these machines worked, cables, chunks of concrete, and rebar were left hanging. Three laborers were using propane torches to cut the hanging cables and rebar while the victim and another worker used skid steer loaders to scoop up the debris and dump it down a chute. As the victim was operating the skid steer loader he was impaled in the neck by a 7 foot long ½ inch wide piece of rebar suspended from the ceiling. He was able to back up the machine and shut it down. A fellow laborer applied pressure to his neck. Emergency medical services were called and rendered first aid. The victim died at the scene.



Requirements

- Do not permit workers to carry on a demolition operation which will expose persons working on a lower level to danger. See WAC 296-155-775(15).
- Provide competent supervision of employees to ensure their safety during the demolition of buildings and structures. See WAC 296-155-775(5).
- Establish, supervise, and enforce effective training programs which allow employees to perform their jobs safely. See WAC 296-155-100(1).
- Ensure that copies of the survey report and the plans and/or methods of operations are maintained at the job site during demolition operations. See WAC 296-155-775(2).

Recommendations

- Do not expose workers to impalement hazards.
- Never allow employees to work on a level while demolition machinery is working on the level above them.
- Conduct an ongoing hazard survey during a demolition project to identify potential hazards, such as suspended rebar.

State Wide Statistics: This was number 33 of 51 work-related fatalities in Washington State during 2011, and was number 4 of 6 construction-related fatalities.

**This bulletin was developed to alert employers and employees of a tragic loss of life of a worker in Washington State and is based on preliminary data ONLY and does not represent final determinations regarding the nature of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality.*

Developed by WA State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program and the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), WA State Dept. of Labor & Industries. The FACE Program is supported in part by a grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). For more information, contact the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program, 1-888-667-4277.

Please help us improve FACE publications by taking a 1-minute survey at [WA FACE survey.com](http://WA_FACE_survey.com)



SHARP-Research for Safe Work

