

Fatality Narrative

Roofing Foreman Run Over by Forklift*

Industry: Roofing Contractors
Occupation: Foreman
Task: Hand carrying materials to construction crew
Type of Incident: Machinery/Struck by

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On December 3, 2003, a roofing contractor foreman was run over by an all-terrain forklift at a construction site. The 42-year-old foreman was employed by a roofing contractor doing work on a high school under construction. The victim was hand delivering some construction materials to the crew. He approached the all-terrain forklift from the back of the equipment. The forklift operator did not see him as he turned the vehicle sharply right to pick up some insulation. At this point the victim was walking next to the forklift's left rear wheel, which was a few feet from a stack of panelized roofing insulation. The forklift had rear-wheel steering so when the forklift turned right, the back-end of the forklift swung left and the rear wheel caught the victim's foot, causing him to pitch forward under the wheel. When the forklift continued to move forward, it ran over the victim's left leg and torso. The victim died at the scene.

Requirements/Recommendations

(! Indicates items required by law)

- ! Employers must ensure that operators of forklifts and other large construction equipment are properly trained in safe operating procedures, that includes specific equipment operating instructions, and warnings regarding steering and maneuvering while traveling through work areas.
- ! Workers must wear high visibility apparel when working around mobile equipment.
- Forklift and construction equipment operators need to be aware of possible pedestrian traffic, persons walking and/or working near the equipment.
- ! All site construction personnel working near construction equipment must be trained in the hazards of working around mobile equipment.
- Never approach operating construction equipment without communicating with the operator by some means: i.e., verbal communication, radio, hand signals, and/or some sort of clear visual contact and recognition. Make sure you don't approach equipment from the operators "blind spots."
- An "Internal Traffic Control Plan" should be developed that defines motor vehicle/construction equipment and pedestrian traffic lanes.
- Equipment manufacturers and owners should install mirrors on mobile equipment so that operators will not have blind spots, and consider installing fenders or guards over unprotected wheels.
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State Wide Statistics: This was the 71st out of 74 work-related fatalities in Washington State during the year 2003, and was the 12th construction-related fatality of the year.

This bulletin was developed at the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries to alert employers and employees in a timely manner of a tragic loss of life of a worker in Washington State. We encourage you to consider the above information as you make safety decisions for or recommendations to your company or constituency. The information in this notice 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 the Washington State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) and Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA) Programs at the WA State Dept. of Labor & Industries. For more information, contact the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program, 1-888-667-4277, <http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research/FACE>.