

Floor Jack Slips, Kills Worker



What happened?

A journey-level heavy equipment mechanic was killed when a hydraulic jack he was using to support a semi-truck axle shifted from its position, allowing the axle assembly to fall on him.

The mechanic had been working with another journey-level, heavy equipment mechanic on a night shift without a supervisor. The shop foreman had left them a list of jobs to perform during the shift. Each mechanic began a task and was working separately on trucks parked in the shop side by side.

The victim was replacing parts on a brake assembly for the third axle on a semi-truck trailer. The axle was equipped with air-ride suspension and was mounted on a suspension arm.

The victim placed a hydraulic jack under the axle and jacked it up. He did not use a jack stand as a safety backup to the hydraulic jack although one was available. When the jack dislodged from its position, the axle suspension arm and assembly fell and killed him.

What can you do to prevent a fatality from happening at your workplace?

- Always use cribbing, blocking or a jack stand to back up a hydraulic or mechanical jack when working under a raised load, as required under state workplace safety regulations.
- Make sure the jack stand is stable. If more than one jack stand is being used, make sure they are raised to equal heights.
- Develop and implement a task-specific and tool-specific safety training program.

- Conduct a job safety analysis, or JSA, to identify hazardous tasks and any necessary training. A JSA is a systematic method for identifying hazards associated with a particular task.
- Develop, implement, follow and enforce shop safety and health rules.

Need more information?

Go to www.Lni.wa.gov/Safety for information on workplace safety and health, rules and policies, sample programs and general assistance. Call 1-800-423-7233 to contact the Department of Labor & Industries (L&I), Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH).

Interested in a free safety and health consultation at your workplace?

You may request assistance from DOSH by telephone, letter, or in person. You may request a complete review of your company's safety and health status or ask for help with a specific problem. A consultant will contact you to schedule a time and date for a free onsite consultation. Visit www.SafetyConsultants.Lni.wa.gov for phone numbers and e-mail addresses of consultants in your area.

How does an employee file a complaint?

Employees or employee representatives may file formal complaints with DOSH when they believe a safety or health hazard exists in their workplace. Complaint forms are available from a local L&I office in both English and Spanish, or on the Web at www.Lni.wa.gov/Safety/Basics/Complaint.

Contact us. We're here to help.

This bulletin was developed by L&I's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) to alert employers, labor groups, and employees of a tragic loss of life. The information in this bulletin is based on preliminary data and does NOT represent final determinations of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality