

Delivery Driver Dies when Forklift Overturns while Delivering Landscape Gardening Materials

INCIDENT FACTS

REPORT #: 71-205-2021s

REPORT DATE: March 9, 2021

INCIDENT DATE: May 14, 2018

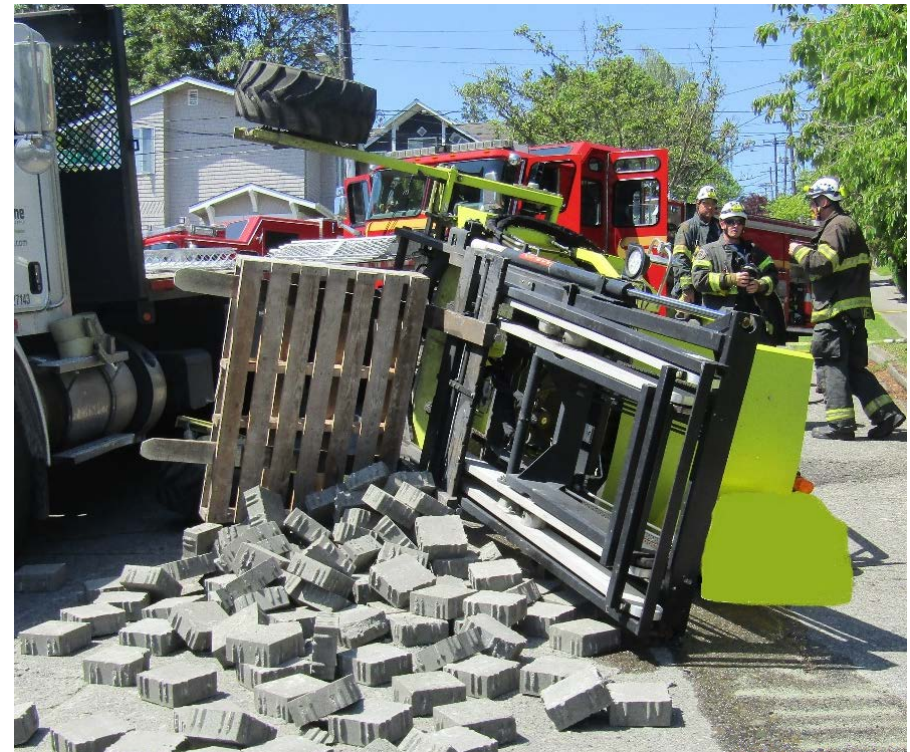
VICTIMS: 59 years old

INDUSTRY: Nursery, Garden Center, and Farm Supply Stores

OCCUPATION: Delivery driver

SCENE: City street adjacent to customer delivery site

EVENT TYPE: Forklift/Tip over/Struck by



A delivery driver died when the truck-mounted forklift he was operating overturned on a city street as he was delivering landscape paving blocks to a residence.

His employer was a landscape gardening materials supplier. He had worked for the company for 18 months. He had a commercial driver's license; previously, he had worked as a delivery driver for other companies.

On the day of the incident, he was making a delivery of eight pallets of manufactured stone landscape paving blocks to a newly constructed residence.

He parked his flatbed truck curbside facing downhill on the 20-degree slope of a city street.

He used the three-wheel drive, truck-mounted forklift to delivery six pallets.

As he prepared to lift a seventh pallet from the flatbed, he positioned the forklift in the street to the side of the flatbed.

The forklift's left front wheel was in a 1 ¾-inch depression in the road. As he was lifting the pallet, the weight of the load and the position of the wheel, caused the forklift to overturn.

The driver, who was not using the seatbelt, was pinned under the forklift's overhead guard.

He died at the scene.

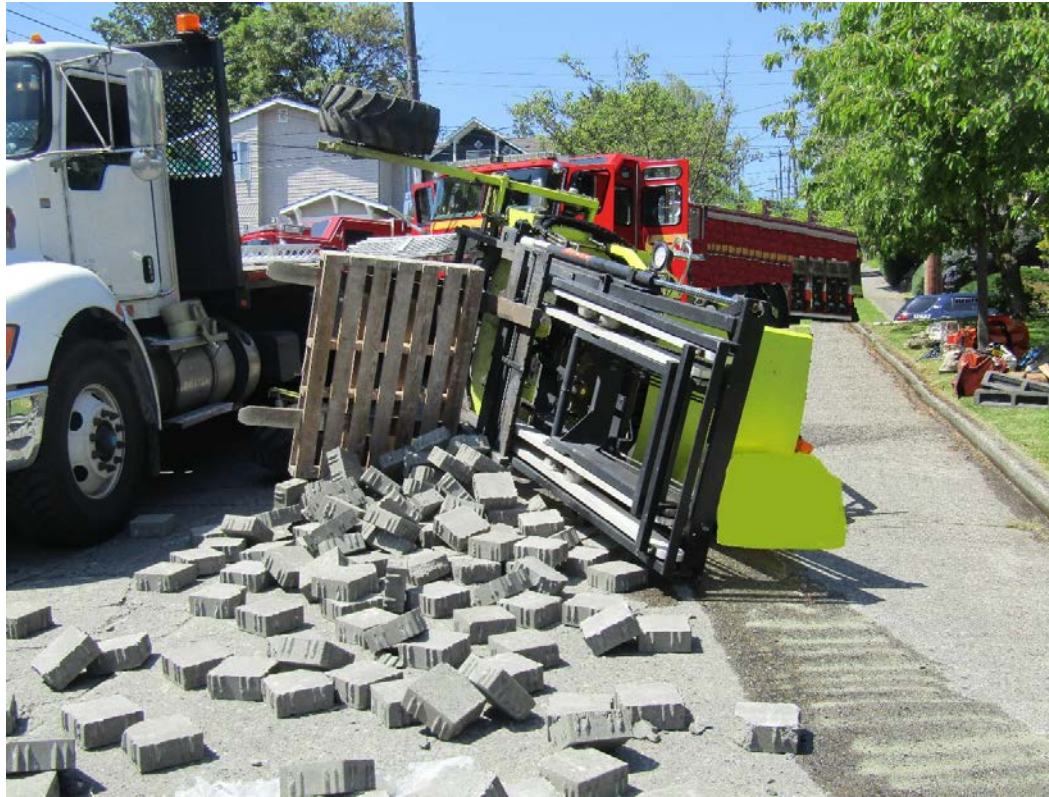


Photo 1. Overturned forklift on city street with a 20-degree slope.



Photo 2. Overturned forklift showing city street slope and surface.



Photo 3. Delivery truck with overturned forklift on city street. The driver was using the forklift to lift a pallet of paving blocks from the flatbed when the forklift overturned.



Photo 4. Forklift at incident scene being loaded onto tow truck flatbed.



Photo 5. Truck-mounted, three-wheel drive forklift similar to incident forklift.

Requirements

- Employers must make sure operators use restraint devices, such as seatbelts or lap-bars when they are provided on the powered industrial truck.
See [WAC 296-863-40005\(1\)](#)
- Employers must conduct walk-around safety inspections.
See [WAC 296-155-110\(9\)](#)

Recommendations

Employers should train employees to avoid driving forklifts on steep slopes. If forklift operators must drive on a slope:

- Avoid sudden movements when the load is raised, as this may cause the forklift to tip over.
- Keep load as low as possible and close to the mast.

Recommendations

If forklift operators must drive on a slope: (cont.)

- Use the lowest transmission gear.
- Reduce travel speed.
- Drive up or down the slope, not across it.
- Travel with heavy end of the forklift upslope. (The forklift did not have a large counterweight, so when this type of forklift is moving a load, operators should point the forks upslope.)

Recommendations

Employers should also:

- Consider equipping forklifts with a safety interlock system that requires that the operator be in the seat with the seatbelt fastened in order to operate the forklift.
- Conduct unplanned site visits as part of their safety program to ensure employees are following proper safety practices.
- Train forklift operators on the requirements of the manufacturer's operator's manual.

Recommendations

- When making deliveries, ensure that there is a safe place to both park the delivery vehicle and operate the forklift. Drivers should communicate with their supervisor if there are problems.

This bulletin was developed to alert employers and employees of a fatality 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 death.

Developed by the Washington State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program and the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), Washington 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 grant# 5U60OH008487). For more information visit www.lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-research/ongoing-projects/work-related-fatalities-face.