

Operator Killed in Tractor Rollover



What happened?

A farm worker was killed when the tractor he was using to mow on a slope rolled and crushed him. Although the tractor had a seatbelt and a rollover protective structure (ROPS) for tractors, they were not in use at the time.

Just prior to the fatal rollover, the worker had mown an area of cherry trees with overhead clearance restrictions, so the rollover protection was not deployed. Attached to the rear end of the tractor was a flail mower attachment, weighing between 1,500 and 1,600 pounds, that was raised as high as it would go, shifting the tractor's center of gravity upward.

The worker was driving the tractor diagonally or across a slope with the attachment raised high when the vehicle rolled and he was killed.

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

- Use rollover protective structures (ROPS) for tractors whenever possible.
- Keep attachments as low as possible. Raising an implement too high changes the center of gravity and can create a tipping hazard.
- Train all tractor operators in the safe use of equipment and require them to follow all safety procedures.

Need more information?

Go to <https://lni.wa.gov/safety-health/> for information on 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 <https://lni.wa.gov/safety-health/preventing-injuries-illnesses/request-consultation/consultant-near-you> 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 your local L&I office in both English and Spanish, or on the Web at <https://lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/workplace-complaints/safety-complaints>.

Contact us. We're here to help.

November 2010

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