



HAZARD ALERT

Fatal Accidents - Mobile Equipment and Foot Traffic

In 2009 there were six fatalities involving mobile equipment and foot traffic at USW represented worksites. There were two fatalities in 2008 and seven in 2007. Here is one example:

In 2009 a mechanic was fatally injured when he was struck-by a CAT 950H front-end loader. The CAT operator thought he heard someone calling for him while he was driving forward; he then proceeded to drive in reverse to the area where the call may have come from. During this time the mechanic entered the work area, but was not seen by the CAT operator due to the inherent blind spots of the equipment and physical obstructions in the area. Neither employee was trained on the equipment's blind spots and there was no written procedure as to how foot traffic should make contact with the operator.



Recommendations to Prevent Recurrence:

- Apply the Hierarchy of Controls to eliminate/separate mobile equipment from foot traffic. For example: use a different type of truck or conveyors where possible, barrier guards/knock-down markers/designated (painted) walkways with gates, eliminate blind spots, widen passageways, limit material storage height and install proper signage "No Foot Traffic."
- Identify unavoidable blind spots and their distances to assist in designating the right equipment for the task - see NIOSH Highway Work Zone Safety Publication.
- Install and maintain safety devices: backup cameras/sensors/mirrors & alarms that can be heard above ambient noise, install lighting/traffic mirrors, motion activated lights/gates, position co-workers to act as spotters, use/maintain radios and more.
- Ensure that operators, other employees and contractors are adequately trained and evaluated on the specific equipment and operations used at the workplace, including a distance rule and approach procedures to mobile equipment. (The USW provides a wide range of health and safety training including mobile equipment).
- Wear work zone safety clothing that meets ANSI A107

NOTE: *The workplace above did not have a joint labor/management health, safety & environment committee, instead the employer implemented a behavior based safety program. This is one deadly reason why the USW is opposed to blame-the-worker safety programs.*



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The information provided in this alert is based on preliminary data only and does not represent final determinations pertaining to the nature of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of this event.