Backward Hose Sets Up Explosion



A bulldozer operator was preparing a roadbed by using the machine to lift trees out of the way. A hydraulic line to the right front hydraulic cylinder ruptured, spraying hydraulic fluid onto the engine manifold and into the operator’s compartment. Upon contact with the hot manifold, the hydraulic fluid ignited, engulfing the operator in flames. He died from the burns.

Investigators looking into this fatality noted repairs and inspections of equipment must be done by a trained, competent person. In this case, a hydraulic hose had been installed backward, causing a bend in the fitting which made contact with the body of the bulldozer. The worn and abraded hose eventually broke, allowing the pressurized hydraulic fluid to escape.