Crushed-between Scissor Lift and Support Beam



A 27-year-old male employee was fatally injured when he was crushed between the railing of a scissor lift and a mezzanine outer support beam while installing insulation on duct work. On the day of the incident, the victim was working alone installing insulation around duct work using a Dyna-Mite Work Platform scissor lift.

The duct work could only be accessed through a small opening approximately eighteen inches high by thirty-one inches wide under the mezzanine deck between the vertical beams, an electrical junction box, and piping. In efforts to reach the area, the victim positioned himself leaning backwards out of the scissor lift with his back resting across the lift upper guard rails.

At some point while installing the insulation the victim became pinned between

the scissor lift upper guard rail and 

the bottom of the mezzanine outer support beam. During the investigation, it was determined that the control console on the scissor lift was missing the guard that prevents the inadvertent activation of the lowering and rising of the work platform.

The control console was found hanging on the opposite side of the lift from the victim’s work position. The most likely scenario is that the victim contacted the unguarded control console with his foot while trying to position himself leaning backwards out of the lift.

Had the guard been in place on the control panel and the victim not been working alone, it is likely this incident would have had a much different outcome. However, during the inspection it also was found the lower controls on the lift were not functioning, so it’s possible that even if someone else was present they may not have been able to move the lift and free the victim in time.

This incident also highlights the importance of preventative maintenance and removing damaged or defective equipment from service until they are repaired or replaced.